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# THE MASTERY OF NERVOUSNESS

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TORONTO

# The Mastery of Nervousness

## *Based Upon Self Reeducation*

BY

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*SECOND REVISED EDITION*

RC
351
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1918

New York
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
1918

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Published, June, 1917
Second Edition, Revised, November, 1917

TO FATHER,
WHO DREAMED;
TO MOTHER,
WHO WROUGHT

# THE PROBLEM

THE modern man is to-day facing for himself or his children the problem of nervous adjustment—that problem which is becoming more complicated each decade. In the complexity and intensity of modern life, this question is more and more frequently presented to the individual: "Shall I lower my standards, shall I surrender in whole or in part; or shall I select wisely and train for mastery?" That the latter decision is possible for the majority of serious-minded men and women is the sole reason for the following pages.

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# THE MASTERY OF NERVOUSNESS

## CHAPTER I

### THE AGE OF NERVOUSNESS

**Prevalence of Nervousness.**—Man was a splendid creation; he is to-day capable of being a splendid creature. His greatness, while expressed in many lines, is distinctly most evident when we consider his superb capacity for complex adjustments. He has conquered his planet; he has charted the heavens; he foretells to the nicety of seconds movements stirring the unseen limits of space. The sea is his; and he floats at will above the clouds. Fire, earth, air and water are his slaves—but he has failed to master himself! His superb powers, probably even to-day in their infancy, are possible because of his intricate, sensitive, responsive nervous system. Man is essentially a nervous being. Blood, muscle, bone, digestive apparatus, his complex secretory system, all exist to minister unto brain and nerves. Evidence is plentiful that through all time this regal, delicate apparatus has been the chief cause of his suffering, as well as of his progress. Ignoring the laws of his being, every great step forward in the complexity of his existence has been marked by nervous disasters.

Throughout all time man has known his surroundings better than he has understood himself. We are to-day living in an age of flux. Cæsar long ago decried "the effeminating influences of civilisation." Never in mankind's splendid history has discovery chased discovery, invention succeeded invention, as during the last generation. Never did civilisation advance with such bewildering strides. Never did she give of herself to so large a proportion of earth's humanity. From the lowliest farmer on his hillside, through all walks of mankind, response to changes and changing conditions of thought and action is felt. Nervousness, once a disease of the elect, now invades the homes of all classes. My neighbour's domestic tranquillity has been disturbed these nine months because his faithful, two-hundred-pound black Mary is suffering with the "nervous prosteration." "De heat ob de gas range has sort o' a drying 'fect on de brain," and she now must take a rest.

**Modern Restlessness.**—The prevalence of modern nervousness cannot be computed. No neighbourhood is without its nervous sufferer. Few homes exist in which some member is not the object of special solicitude because of weak nerves. "He is a nervous child;" "She is taking the rest-cure;" "He has gone to pieces;" "My wife is just recovering from a nervous breakdown;" "I am as nervous as a cat;" "Let me alone until I pull myself together;" "Jones is 'all in,' he acts batty"—are matter-of-course, daily exchanged expressions these modern days. In fact, the man or woman who to-day truth-

fully and quietly can say, "As for me and my household, nervousness is unknown," is indeed rare and good to look upon.

In the effort to help this multitude of the nervous, civilised lands are dotted with sanitaria, special hospitals and rest-cure resorts. Thousands of skilled men are making the study of these disorders their life's work. The chemist is evolving a constantly growing list of more or less damaging compounds to combat the multiplied manifestations of this disease. Special foods, elaborate systems of exercise, spinal supports and rubber heels, specially tinted walls and harmless waters from faraway springs, begoggled noses, and beds placed compass-wise and insulated with glass casters, slamless doors and dogless towns—all speak eloquently of modern man's nervous estate. Few magazines published are of so high a tone that they do not carry lengthy advertisements of some new method of thought healing. New religions spring into existence full-fledged, soon counting their followers by the tens of thousands, because of their capacity to eradicate that long list of disorders which accurate science recognises as manifestations of nervous disease. Probably the majority of civilised men and women are to-day making conscious concessions to their nerves, avoiding this and doing that, eating meat or not eating meat, exercising or resting, living this life or avoiding the other, suffering or expecting to suffer because of their nerves.

The truly intelligent physician recognises that

more than half of his work is directed to the overcoming of functional, not organic, diseases. He also recognises that in his multiplied and complex efforts to relieve patients, one-half of the beneficial effects of his treatment is due to conscious or unconscious suggestion. He will tell you that the large majority of the medicines he prescribes produce no change whatever in either the quality or the action of the tissues of the body; that in only a small per cent. of drugs used have the most accurate scientific investigations been able to show definite physical or chemical action. The effects of the majority of medicines are produced upon the patient's mind. In many of the other means used by physicians for treatment, the benefits are largely the result of mental suggestion. Electricity, hailed a generation since as the great rejuvenator of nervous strength, has long since been discarded by the educated physician, excepting for a few known, definite, chemical or mechanical effects which it is capable of producing. Science now recognises that many of the wonderful cures in the past were due to its influence on the sufferer's mind, and that to-day these effects can be more surely, definitely and honestly obtained by more direct means. Hydrotherapy—the method of treating disease by means of water—has devised many complicated forms of water application; and the devotees of water cure have invented intricate apparatus to carry out these elaborate forms of treatment. Hydrotherapy intelligently used does produce definitely helpful physical reactions, which can-

not be so well secured otherwise; but its distinctively curative principles are few, and the scientific use of water has an unquestioned but limited scope of benefit. All of these various and multiplied means of combating nervousness but emphasise the widespread prevalence of the disorder.

Modern restlessness is everywhere in evidence. Stolidity is rare, stability exceptional. Our children are restless and uneasy, constantly planning diversion and pleasure. Even the three-year-old child begs to go down-town to the picture show. Young manhood and womanhood rush from school into the great vortex of the world's work with a restless eagerness, long before the nervous system has been trained to stand strain without damage. The mania for work alternates with a frenzy for pleasure, and intensity becomes the key-note in many modern families. All too frequently the soothing hand of age fails to quiet the restless pulse. The household has hardly been adjusted to the return from the winter home before the summer vacation is taken in the midst of hustle and bustle and a commotion which is never peace and at best but doubtful pleasure.

Modern life is high tension life—a life of increasing strain. To meet it, our schools and colleges are raising their standards and increasing their demands. Less than a century ago a Master's degree from the best colleges was given after a course of study which is now but a high school requirement. Often our children's intellects are forced and their minds keyed to concert pitch—the minds of mere

boys and girls, still in knickerbockers and short dresses; and modern standards pursue them like the Fates of old, nor dare they pause nor turn back. Intensity—not as a periodic flash of force to meet an emergency, but as a chronic, devitalising process —marks much of so-called modern education. Not only is the intellect thus damagingly forced, but the emotional life is trained into early disequilibrium through the vivid horrors of the daily news, reeking with slime and crime—the world's garbage heap laid on the breakfast table. Modern social intercourse puts a premium on emotional intensity. Brilliancy, vivacity, piquancy command universal homage; while calmness, simplicity and repose are ofttimes passed by as wearisome. Will development is neglected—'tis an old-fashioned process. Only a few years have elapsed since our educational leaders have recognised the fundamental necessity for physical training. Will and body alike are neglected in the average home in this day of high speed, high pressure, high finance and straining for high places; and the strain of modern living grows apace.

**Modern Intensity.**—Modern stimuli are increasing much faster than our nervous training for adaptation. Great as is man's capacity for complex adjustments, the multiplying demands of modern life are coming too fast. We live as travellers on a limited train. Farms, homes, villages, cities, rivers, mountains whirl by. There is no time to carefully note or know any of them. Stops are few, and those only in the midst of rush, turmoil and bustle; and life has

become but "one jammed thing after another." The telephone alone has brought the nation into our homes, and has increased our points of contact a thousandfold. The electric car and the auto have enlarged our field of action immensely, and multiplied our duties, responsibilities, interests and opportunities in geometric ratio. Modern living is high living—intellectually, emotionally, socially. It is a kaleidoscopic maze, with increasingly less time for deliberation and contemplation. It is so cluttered with external interests with their insatiable demands that the study or even the recognition of life's fundamentals is becoming a lost art to the average man. He looks to the specialist in all branches of knowledge and effort to think for him, while he lives a life of emotional intoxication and superficial judgments in the nerve-exhausting struggle. As for himself, the silver cord of reason is loosed and the golden bowl of poise is broken.

Never has such an infinite variety of choice been offered man—choice demanding repeated series of readjustments. Ours is an age of competition. Many industries have long ceased to expect profit from their regular products, depending entirely upon scientific utilisation of once rejected by-products for gain. Industrial strife increases with the years. Brawn resents the independence of brain, and struggles with increasing might for its larger portion. Brain conspires and connives to retain its lion's share. The professions are crowded with men and women seeking to rise above the average of their

kind, seeking by intellectual displacement more of the comforts and honours of superiority. Gold and art and talent and time and ability and intensity are the prices paid for social supremacy. The demands of all walks of life are those of increased intricacy and complexity. Each succeeding generation of workers carries a heavier burden of responsibility. Modern life lays upon every normal individual a demand for either increased aggressiveness, if he will maintain his position at the forefront of progress, or an increasingly complicated self-defence, if he is not to be hopelessly trampled by the onrush of civilised feet. All things simple are being accounted cheap or are subject to ridicule. In almost every home the comforts of a generation gone have become to-day's necessities; while luxury, increasing though it does life's complexity countlessfold, is sought and claimed by the majority as an essential comfort. Pleasure ever beckons to the weary modern life—the life which demands to be pleased, demands to be amused, but which has long since lost the joy and blessing and recreation of the art of play.

## CHAPTER II

### WHAT IS NERVOUSNESS?

**The Valuable Nervous Temperament.**—As we have already seen, in man's unequalled capacity for adjustment to his physical, mental and moral surroundings resides his almost limitless powers. His body apparently thrives best in the temperate zone, but perfect specimens of physical strength and health may be found from the eternal ice-packs to the sweltering tropics. Human flesh and blood have now stood at the earth's axes where the temperature stays so deadly low as to congeal the mercury in the thermometer; while the trained puddler works regularly and rapidly, guiding the flowing rivers of molten steel in temperatures ranging high above 200 degrees. The aviator climbs mile upon mile into the rare air of the deep sky; his brother seeks the bottom the sea or lives his working life entombed in the blackness and heaviness of the mine's depths. It is given the human body to adjust itself to these and a thousand more variations.

When man's mind awoke, he found himself surrounded by bewildering intricacy. Curiosity gave place to wonder, wonder to investigation, investigation to knowledge; and knowledge is to-day grouped into the large family of sciences which have revealed

to human understanding the operations of the laws determining the growth of the bluet of the mountain-side, the iris-tinted sparkle of the dewdrop, and the everlasting, unswerving hurtling of systems of worlds through the limitless void of space. Within the human intellect resides a power of adjustment that is marvellous, a power which makes possible an intimate acquaintance with all the varied and wondrous manifestations of world stuff and order. Man lives under a hundred forms of government, ruled wisely, brutally, self-ruled and enslaved. A thousand religions and philosophies have ordered his conduct, and to all these the mind has responded with adjustments which have maintained a surprising degree of sanity.

In his moral nature progress has been less rapid and universal; nevertheless, some of the greatest miracles of human adjustment have occurred in this sphere of his being. Few civilisations now exist which do not demand that much which is humanly instinctive be made secondary to the will of man or the interpreted will of God. The civilised individual is indeed rare who does not, early in his development, rise above the power of animal impulse to rule. Physical disabilities and perverse mental habits of years may be changed in a night, when some great light breaks in upon the human soul—light which stands for liberty, or mastery, or victory, or purity or Godliness. There is truly no more miraculous adjustment conceivable in human nature than that which tears the soul away from the multiplied and

unquestioned pleasures of selfishness, from the seductive and tantalising wooings of the physical, from the dominating and masterful biddings of ambition, to the surrender of all that we are wont to call liberty and individuality, in response to the callings of the still, small voice. The soul's capacity to accept personal injury and injustice and humiliation for righteousness' sake, while rare, illustrates incontestably the scope of human capacity for moral adjustment.

Where, may we ask, resides the power which makes this almost infinite variety of actions and reactions possible? What is the secret of this almost God-like ability? Infinite in variety as it is, its accomplishment results alone from the reaction of man's nervous system to external and internal stimuli, in the response to the infinitude of influences which surround him in his many-sided universe, or which challenge him through the complexities of his own ever-changing mind. Let the word "mother" be spoken in a company of ten. Love, sorrow, responsibility, tenderness, remorse, gratitude, fear, determination, pride or bitterness may be stimulated; visions of childhood flash out of the past, memories of illness, recollections of the art and the efficiency of discipline, the tender face with its halo of age. These and countless other emotions and impressions but illustrate the variety of reactions possible to the sound of two syllables.

Most of the reactions of physical adjustment are carried on through this marvellous nervous system in a manner quite unknown to its owner, activities

beneficently placed below the surface of consciousness to be continuously executed without effort of mind, still ever subject indirectly to the activities of consciousness. Many mental operations become automatic through habit, and as we grow older more and more of our mental accomplishments are carried on with little or no conscious thought effort—thanks to this great law of mental economy. Still at all times, in all situations, the normal brain with its myriad-sided mind is the controlling centre.

The capacity for reactions and adjustment varies with the individual. No two minds possess equally all of the varying possibilities of reaction power. Every one of life's experiences adds to or subtracts something from this capacity. Some beings are mere phlegmatic dolts, responding with less activity than the average animal to the ceaseless stimuli of their surroundings. In the dull brain a few ideas only have been given birth. To feed, to laze, to avoid effort—little else counts in this life of magnificent possibilities. The "thousand-souled Shakespeare" attends and responds, and ten thousand beauties of thought and pages of rare, new wisdom and undying truths, and appealing, convincing, living portraits of the human soul are penned—pages to delight, teach and inspire the sons of men through passing generations. Again the response may be that of the wretched, overwrought, sensitive-plant, starting with every sound, shrinking and quivering at every manifestation of force, resenting and suffering in the presence of real or fancied misunder-

standing, keenly and painfully alive to every discomfort; weakening and wilting and retreating from every hurt. The capacity for human responsiveness is limited only by the capacity of the mind to know, the emotions to feel and the will to act.

When we understand how inseparable all of man's activities are from his nervous system, it is easy to realise how infinitely rich is the possessor of the nervous temperament. Give the dullard his comforts; the world's work, the ambitions of men, the joys, the beauties and masteries of life are possessed by those of keen, active, nervous organisation. Let no one so blest ever decry his heritage. True it is that side by side with the finest capacity for conceiving, accomplishing and enjoying, abides the keenest capacity for suffering. But it is for us to realise that the latter stands for unnecessary disorder in the operation of nervous action—that greatest expression of human vital force, that incomparable gift to mankind.

**Nature of Nervousness.**—It is impossible to conceive such a complex and highly organised capacity without recognising its inherent tendency to disorder. This disorder of the nervous mechanism has for years been loosely styled "nervousness," "neurotic" being the scientific term for one so afflicted. A study of the many possible deviations from normal nervous activity makes it clear that two departures from the normal include practically all the nervous. Nervous activity becomes the disease "nervousness" when it is misdirected or when it is

overactive. Man was endowed with reason to direct his choice of objects to which his mind should respond. Reason, the mind's great counsellor, selects from the multitude the object of each moment's attention. In the nervous, waste, injury and hurt are constantly occurring because the mind has not followed the direction of reason, but rather the counsel of fear, enmity or desire, or has drifted upon damaging quick-sands, guided only by instinct. Nervous activity misdirected is as common as human life. We all turn at times from reason's calm, often colourless, counsel, led by the rainbow or midnight of our emotions. A certain amount of emotionalism is possible to the average person without lasting damage, but to all who surrender and allow perverted nervous action to become a habit, the penalty of wasted and misused vital energy will assert itself as "nervousness." Such a penalty is paid by him who allows his life to be controlled by moods. Such is the cost, in human strength and happiness, of surrender to fear. A life of emotional riot inevitably invites the depths of nervous discomfort.

Man was given a will to choose, control and limit his nervous expenditure. While the reason may select and give direction to thought and feeling responses, it is the will that gives to these responses the force necessary to success, or, in its deficient action, allows desire, impulse or feeling to urge nervous action on to damaging, exhausting and even destroying extremes. Uncontrolled nervous activity, even when directed as advised by reason, may

wreck itself through overintensity or exhaust itself through overindulgence.

In studying the nature of "nervousness," we must dispel the common error that it is a disorder of the nerves. The nerves are mere insensate cords, carrying impressions to and from the brain. All of man's infinite responses take place, not in his nerves, but in his central nervous system. Mind, not nerves, is at fault. Nervous health is a mental state, not a physical condition. We shall find that physical disturbances play a large part in the production of nervousness; we shall also find that normal reason and will can face extremes of physical suffering without surrender. Many of the mistaken ideas connected with nervousness are easily displaced when we consider the intimate relation of mind and body. The body's organs are constantly influenced by the mind through what is called the sympathetic nervous system. The relation between mind and body is so active, and the nervous system so able to record an infinite variety of sensations, that the sufferer finds dire confusion in distinguishing nervous discomforts from those produced by mechanical or chemical injuries to the tissues or organs of his body. When it is realised that there is a nervous counterpart for every organic disease; that no form of physical damage exists which is not imitated and reproduced by sensations practically identical with those accompanying the organic disease, it is easy to understand the immense variety of nervous symptoms and the practically unlimited manifestations of nervous dis-

comfort. To repeat, nervousness is a disease of numberless possible expressions. There is no form of illness, pain, distress, practically no alteration in circulation, no disturbance in the various processes of digestion, no disease of the respiratory organs—indeed, no defective bodily function—which a highly-wrought, disordered nervous system may not imitate. Sensations as varied as the scale of human capacity for feeling, sensations apparently recording disturbances in a dozen organs, may one and all be but expressions of an overresponsive brain. With this conception, from the almost hopeless tangle of nervous sensations emerges the comforting truth, that when the central nervous system is restored to normal, all will be well. The brain, itself insensible, reflects its discomforts to a thousand nooks of the body, and its ill mind blames every one of its co-workers with wrong-doing. Nervousness, then, is truly a mental, not a physical, illness. Nervousness represents a high capacity for response to external and internal stimuli, with lack of selective and inhibitory control.

## CHAPTER III

### TYPES OF NERVOUSNESS

As we have already seen, disturbances of the central nervous system manifest themselves in an infinite variety of responses. These responses produce numerous types of nervous sufferers, no two being identical, as no two individuals are identical; yet, like individuals, the nervous types are conveniently and rather easily grouped. Our understanding of nervous disorders will be simplified through an insight into their most commonly observed forms.

The most conspicuous of all nervous sufferers belong to the so-called motor type. In this form of the disorder constant restlessness is the rule. It would seem that those parts of the brain which control muscular activity are in an extremely overactive state, and constant misdirected energy in the form of useless, often purposeless, movements, attracts the attention of all observers. The patient's inability to control this waste of energy discloses the helplessness of his will. Most persons of nervous temperament are constantly losing more or less energy through some of the many useless, wasteful habits of action. Few of us converse without an accompaniment of chair-rocking or foot-jerking, grimace of face or extravagant gesture of hands. The average

school-child in writing his lesson expends far more energy with his tongue and face and feet than with his fingers. Our young lady has become well trained in the better social customs when, even in public, she does not handle her face, pull at her gloves, repeatedly adjust her neck-dress, tuck up imaginary strands of hair, and finger and fumble her ornaments. These are but minor expressions of this form of the disorder, which includes many more seriously exhausting habits of useless movement, notably the tics or so-called "habit spasms." Under the influence of these, strength-wasting shrugging of shoulders, twisting of necks, tugging of moustache or twitching of face continue year after year in hopeless efforts to adjust body or clothing. These, and many like wasteful actions, become such inveterate habits as to make life totally wretched if the compelling impulsions to repeat and ever repeat the movements are not humoured. Nervous activity has become overactive—damagingly and exhaustingly so. In the most extreme forms of this variety of weakness, the patient becomes entirely incapacitated for purposeful action, all his strength and attention being expended in a chaos of useless doing.

The hypersensitive nervous type is the most common. In these sufferers, reason fails to select wisely, and as a result the victim responds more and more constantly, not by action, but by feeling, to useless and wasteful sensations. Many "would-be" aristocrats pride themselves upon their sensitive nature. Their feelings are too delicate for vulgar

contact. True sensitiveness is one of the finest strains of character. It knows no selfish discriminations. True sensitiveness responds eternally and unselfishly to human goodness and human need. But it is not so with the unhappy hypersensitive. He suffers from constantly enlarging varieties of contact. Each change in the weather affects his comfort; the voices of progress and industry affect his rest; all forms of physical and mental discomfort are avoided as the plague; the quality and preparation of his dinner are vital to his evening's serenity; peace in the household depends upon a slavish observance of the niceties of his dominating sensibilities. He is a veritable slave to sensation, feeling being the only motive for doing, reason being helpless before the tyrant sensation; and will has long since surrendered in the fight with impulse. So sensitive are these slaves of feeling that the inflection of the morning greeting, the frown or smile, the misunderstood word or action, may be producers of poignant misery. Unchecked, the disorder ultimately ostracises its victim from all normal concourse and useful activity. All life's energies are spent in the avoidance of discomforts. The clock's ticking must be stopped, the electric bells muffled, the voices of the children hushed. These sufferers are ofttimes driven into obscurity, seeking the quietude demanded by their overwrought brain and sickly, sensitive mind. It is from this class that the large and wretched company of drug users is recruited, suffering individuals who rapidly become the help-

less and hopeless victims of drug and drink, and finally, miserably wretched, dangerous dregs of humanity.

The suggestible type is also common. Suggestibility, or the capacity of being influenced by feeling rather than by reason, is normal in childhood before reason has developed, and it is purely an individual matter as to the degree of control reason will ultimately assume. Accurately considered, the suggestible type represents a failure of reason to attain masterful development. In the normal, full-grown mind, reason weighs all information, all appeals, all influences, and directs choice. In the suggestible this guiding counsel is secondary to the demands and instructions and insinuations of the emotions.

Damaging suggestion may come, as it usually does, from without. The patent medicine advertisement, with its vivid descriptions of disease, creates an impression so strong in the suggestible mind as to stimulate the subconscious and produce symptoms which sooner or later appear to the conscious mind as the identical or a kindred disease. Herein abides the power of "cure-alls" to suggest dollars from the pockets of the suggestible. Newspaper reproductions of vicious and impossible creatures labelled "germs," impel the fearsome housewife to besprinkle her goods and chattels with vile-smelling disinfectants, even to the neglect of wholesome, health-saving cleanliness. The scarlet fever placard, flaming forth its warning from the house front, sends the suggestible to the opposite side of the street,

where, with face averted and breathing suspended, they protect themselves from impossible dangers.

In another form of suggestibility, termed auto-suggestion, the patient is influenced by impressions originating within his own mind. The discomforts of an illness of many years ago may be unconsciously treasured in the memory, and as the result of depression following some disappointment or sorrow, or through the disturbing influence of some shock or fear, the painful sensation may be resurrected from memory, and reconstructed in the mind as a return of the old disorder. Many quite normal individuals will sicken, and at times even vomit, by simply recalling some nauseating experience or scene of the far past. In hysteria, which is the typical form of nervous disorder in which suggestibility is the basis, there is absolutely no known physical disease which is not counterfeited, mimicked, reproduced in the sensations of the sufferer. The modern physician in treating this disorder searches the patient's mentality for the damaging root idea, which has occasioned the emotional disturbances—fear, anxiety, apprehension or what may be, which are the basis of the physical sensations interpreted by the patient as true disease of the body. Suggestibility unchecked may reach a degree of intensity in which reason is helpless and will absolutely without effect, in which the sufferer becomes a vapid puppet of weird, demoralising, disintegrating sensations, bred simply in his own mind. We are tempted to speak of hysterical symptoms as being imaginary dis-

orders; we must realise, however, that they are disorders of the imagination.

In our modern life with its rapidly lessening demand for physical activity, muscular development and strength and resistance are becoming increasingly defective. The demands upon our nervous energies and responses have multiplied a thousandfold since the quiet days of our grandfathers. Physiology tells us that all forms of fatigue are essentially mental. Prone to think that our muscles are tired, we often sink down expressing complete exhaustion. A sudden danger puts strength and speed into our momentarily sense-wearied frame; a life-saving emergency develops capacity for effort which we are apt to call "superhuman." We were not exhausted; we felt that we were. Fatigue is practically always nervous. Most of the fatigue and exhaustion so common to-day is not produced by physical effort, but results from emotional wear and tear, friction and waste.

Modern days are producing an increasingly large number of those who suffer from undue fatigability. The neurologist speaks of this form of nervous inadequacy as neurasthenia. In an analysis of the neurasthenic type we rarely find the individual suffering damaging fatigue through the calm, masterful carrying out of a reasonably selected course of activity. Emotional waste is the most rapidly fatiguing and exhausting of all forms of effort. A physically frail woman may suddenly develop acute mania, and for hours and days and weeks keep up an almost ceaseless activity, expending a hundred foot-tons of

energy daily to each ten she apparently possessed before her illness, such endurance being spoken of as the "superhuman power of the maniac." Truly nothing has been added to her strength! But insanely unconscious of the sensations of fatigue, insanely intent on carrying out her irrational activity, she expends power which in her normal state was unknown. The sufferer from fatigability of the neurasthenic type is a victim of disorder of energy, usually involving the growth and training of will. Even more frequently, the fatigable type develops from the basis of oversensitiveness to the normal discomforts of fatigue.

Probably no form of nervousness has become so popular as neurasthenia. Pronounced neurastheni'a, it is indeed quite an aristocratic disorder. Many men and women of usefulness and ability, usually living in unconscious violation of the laws of nervous health, date numerous events of their life's calendar in relation to their first, third or fifth nervous breakdown. Many neurotics, consciously or unconsciously shrewd, are able to secure periodic vacations, comfortably spent under hospital or sanitarium care, or a long rest at some health resort, through an opportune breakdown of this type. The time is rapidly coming when the uselessness of such lapses from productiveness will be regarded with the same sense of shame as an attack of typhoid fever or other preventable filth-borne disease.

The hypochondriac presents quite a difficult type of nervousness. His selection of reaction subjects

(for he is usually masculine) is practically limited to those relating to his own body, and upon these subjects he reacts most actively, constantly and consistently. The stomach is the organ most frequently selected. We all have a certain hazy consciousness of what is occurring in this section of our digestive apparatus, but the hypochondriac studies its every mood. "Too much acid" to-day, "too sluggish" to-morrow, again "overactive" and later "turning everything into gas." This usually innocent offender, which would attend to its own business very efficiently if let alone, furnishes food for thought, attention, converse, fear and despair through many of the hypochondriac's waking hours. Again the heart may be the object of his attentive devotion, and he becomes a chronic pulse-feeler, stopping in the midst of his meal to see if the last swallow of ice-water was not overstimulating, or does not threaten to suddenly paralyse the action of this faithful servant. Or the eyes may be subject to repeated scrutiny, and their normal actions misinterpreted. They "have an unnatural look," "the pupils are too large," he "knows they are wrong," even after painstaking examinations by experts have failed to reveal any abnormality. The various excretions and secretions of the body are studied with infinite care, and abnormal importance laid on the normal manifestations of healthy bodily activity, to many of which are ascribed an import and significance absolutely unknown to science. The hypochondriac's will is thoroughly active in the defence of his precon-

ceived ideas, and his confidence in his own opinion is so vain and determined that he will defy the hopeful opinions of a score of physicians as to his recovery.

The self-centred type of nervous illness is clearly marked in many cases. Self-centredness is very prone to deface the character of all nervous sufferers; reasonably so, for the source of the suffering is a perverted self. Perhaps no type of human illness so inevitably produces the bore as this form of sickness. Reason and will are derailed. Petty, selfish interests and the concerns of self, contract and narrow, even to deformity, lives of brilliant promise. Self-attention blocks the efforts of reason to go afield for the material of new interests. Will is inevitably weakened in the face of devitalising self-pity, contracting self-study, and demoralising self-interest. In this self-centred group are found the conceited neurotics who exalt their symptoms as true divinities which they worship in and out of season. They are capable of instantly waxing eloquent on the endless details of their illnesses, ever asserting their claims of suffering superiority even as they might enlarge on virtues won through a life of sacrifice. The conceited neurotic insists that there never was a case like his; that medical science has never witnessed suffering such as his and with just his set of symptoms. Conceited sufferers they are, who frequently are quite satisfied to remain so, and continue to seek counsel, unsatisfied, until they do find the physician who admits that he never saw a like case. While in fact he is usually the ordinary, self-satisfied, self-cen-

tred neurotic, as common to the nerve specialist as toothaches to the dentist. These patients are visibly restless in the face of any discussion or activity which does not allow them self-expression of self. Many of the manifestations of nervousness are so selfish, so crude, so ignorant, as to call forth impatience, or at best to excite only charitable pity.

There remains one class of the nervous, however, to whom a certain homage should be given—those who, through a determined, but unfortunate, overactive expression of the will, develop abnormal repression. The repressed nervous type suffers acutely but silently, without demonstration or effort to attract attention. Frequently calm in the midst of turmoil, hubbub, strife, often very efficient under conditions in which others lose self-control, these silent sufferers deserve high respect. The energy leak goes on for years. The mind is literally feeding upon itself, but the control remains apparently unbroken, until finally the tension exceeds endurance, and a hysterical or neurasthenic outbreak reveals the effects of the years of repression. Even in this type, however, careful mental analysis will show that there have long been unwise or unworthy intellectual or emotional reactions, producing chronic energy leakage. The considerate, determined efforts at mastery place the repressed nervous patient on a distinctly higher plane than the average self-pitying, attention-craving, responsibility-avoiding, sympathy-demanding, self-centred neurotic.

## CHAPTER IV

### GETTING READY TO BE NERVOUS

**Heredity.**—Does an enemy stand at the portal through which humankind enters upon life, an enemy who is willing to brand one child out of three with tendencies and weaknesses which may later result in nervous wreckage? It would so seem, for parents not only pass to their children hue of skin, contour of face and limit of stature, but mental characteristics and tendencies, abilities and defects, dispositions and temperaments. Powers and weaknesses which lead on to successful independence or to nervous disaster may be traced through succeeding generations. The Mendelian law of heredity finds accurate fulfilment in the mental as well as the physical characteristics of descent. It is not alone his personal heritage that a man is capable of transmitting to his offspring, but also certain weaknesses and powers which he has himself acquired—weaknesses and powers quite independent of those he received from his parents; these too may be passed on as factors determining the weal or woe of his children.

A few diseases, practically always the result of some form of self-indulgence in the parent, may reappear in the second and even the third generation. Too much emphasis cannot be placed on the

fact that the damage man does through intemperance in certain of his indulgences is not limited to its effects upon himself, but these weaknesses find expression in the multiplied miseries and erratic, defective nervous systems of his children and grandchildren. These innocent victims are condemned before birth to live with nervous systems attuned to discord, nervous systems at best capable of expressing life only through minor strains, and often hopelessly deficient in capacity for whole-souled chords of joy or pæans of victory, pitiable, depressed, morbid, blighted lives. None of us is responsible for the heritage he receives from his forebears; all of us are everlastingly responsible for the use we make and the care we take of that heritage, and when we increase its perversity and double its power to damage the flesh of our flesh, we sell the most sacred responsibility of our birthright for the mess of pottage. Ignorance formerly excused and still excuses the ignorant; but while knowledge is rapidly increasing, the strength of will to put that knowledge into living use is diminishing.

A few years ago a writer on the question of intemperance would have headed his list of damaging indulgences with alcohol. While in no way discounting the frightful toll of nervous wreckage which alcohol has wrought and is still working, the primary emphasis must be laid upon a more common and seductive enemy. Food intemperance is a larger factor in producing the damage which results in defective nervous offspring, than any other single

cause. Food intemperance in our land of plenty is almost universal. Self-poisoning from overeating produces far greater total damage to nervous health than overindulgence in alcohol. Excesses in meats, sweets or fats, if habitual and not neutralised by proper exercise, will, within the first or second generation, result in a condition of overacidity, now recognised as one of the most common and fundamental physical causes of modern nervous irritability.

Nations, as well as individuals, are accepting the unquestioned nervous damage of alcohol, used even in moderate amounts. Many appalling and unquestionably distorted statements have been made to frighten the drinker from his cups. But it would seem that when a committee appointed by a government to investigate the harmful effects of alcohol, after an exhaustive study reports that the drinker's life is shortened twenty-five minutes by every glass of alcoholic liquor, even the reckless would hesitate. Six years are knocked off the earthly existence of the average regular drinker. Within his rights, the tippler answers that it is his own life that he is shortening, and if he pleases to so live and die, he alone is hurt. Few so live to-day that they can thus curtail their lives without adding to the burdens of others. But self-damage and ruthless ignoring of kith and kin are insignificant when compared to the very mark of Cain which the alcoholic passes on to the majority of his children. Three out of four of the offspring of average drinkers show inherited defects,

chiefly of the nervous system. Many an intense, unhappy, miserable, high-strung neurotic of to-day is the defective daughter of a genial, jovial, easy-going, easy-living, old-school gentleman, whose mint juleps of good fellowship burn hot in the brains of his children. Numbers of fearsome epileptics go through lives of fierce uncertainty, the unhappy products of a single ancestral spree. It is the helpless offspring, the little ones brought into a world of strife and work, robbed before birth of that stability which stands for ability, of that poise which is essential to peace, to whom the drinking father or wine-bibbing mother is to be pointed. For the sake of their posterity, either parenthood or alcohol in any form must be denied. No father or mother may indulge, ever so moderately, in this arch poison of the nervous system with any certainty that his or her children will not be nervously marred.

Excessive use of tobacco, a habit rapidly growing because of the temporary relief which it gives to the increasing nervous tension of the average individual, like chronic food poisoning, can but deface the delicate nervous mechanism of the offspring. So the inexorable and irrevocable laws of heredity should never be forgotten by parents, even as they should never be remembered by children, save as a spur to the individual to stimulate him to unusual efforts in self-knowledge and self-control, such unusual efforts in rational living as are necessary to compensate for the accumulation of ancestral defects, for the brand of the enemy at life's portal may be effaced by a life

of such wholeness of living as will outweigh the damning heritage of ignorant or selfish indulgence.

Home Training.—Many children of nervous parents, if transplanted into surroundings where simplicity, law and order prevailed, would surely develop into happy, productive men and women. But all too often the influences of home surroundings are but a continuation of the tendencies of heredity. The neurotic who has learned to live comfortably and successfully with himself is the rare exception. As a rule, those defects which he has put into the blood of his child are intensified by year after year of injurious personal influence. The family, whether normal or neurotic, is rare indeed, in which true wisdom directs the newcomer's early months. In the average well-regulated family, order and punctuality disappear with the baby's advent, and yet for no one in the household are order and punctuality more needful. A large share of the common waste in care, effort and anxiety attendant upon the early weeks of parenthood would disappear if system and discipline were introduced from the first, and labour-saving and strength-giving habits of eating, sleeping, and bathing established.

The properly-trained child has become adjusted to his new life by his fourth month—a life which should, above all things, stand for quietude and simplicity. The overstimulation of useless, damaging attentions grows out of the average parents' forgetfulness that the little one has but recently arrived from a land of sleep and silence, and their ignorance of the serious

facts that its nervous system is as delicate and subject to injury as the bloom on the fruit, and that its needs are the very simplest, chief of which, after proper feeding, are weeks and months of rest and quiet. The hours of prolonged stimulations, the excessive carrying, swinging and rocking, the feverish jolting to which the average baby is subjected, are indeed sufficient reason for many of the addled brains of maturity. By four months the sensibly-reared child has become a model baby, comfortable and happy. Too frequently, however, four months finds him the tyrant of the home, and tyrant the little one remains often through childhood, until hard and wholesome worldly contact displaces his despotism by a tardy recognition of the rights of others.

The modern physician gives very explicit and earnest directions to the mother as to her child's feeding, emphasising his admonitions with the statement that over half the children who die from summer complaint were fed to death; and, looking into the child's future welfare, he warns her that the seeds of chronic digestive weaknesses are usually sown during the first twelve or fifteen years of child-life. He cannot lay too great emphasis upon the benefits, physical and nervous, of wise feeding. Wise feeding is regular feeding, is moderate feeding, is the feeding of simple foods, is the protection of childhood from that long list of unnecessary ailments and illnesses which are the penalty of ignorant feeding.

Excessive feeding of sweets is the commonest

temptation. The richer meats, foods cooked in grease, and above all, foods containing alcohol, should be denied. For the very habit of self-denial, the recognition by the child that there are many things in life which are not for his earlier years, is one of the fundamental lessons in self-control which makes for safety. On the other hand, food antipathies should be early combated. Many scrawny, weak, miserable-looking children, lacking resistance to fight any serious infection, are the irritable, nervous products of cake and chocolates, refusing to eat, and in the minds of their incompetent mothers, unable to eat the simple, wholesome bone and blood producing foods—children starving in the midst of plenty. Many children of apparently intelligent families are allowed to grow into maturity untaught in the enjoyment of many wholesome foods, living on diets so limited as to rob them constantly of beneficial food elements. The parent is exceptional to-day who sees to it that his children learn as a matter of course to eat what is served, including properly-cooked cereals and vegetables, understanding that if not sufficiently hungry for plain food they certainly are not in need of dessert. We are prone to allow the likes and dislikes of our children to run riot, not taking the trouble to see that they are alike wholesome. We do not give them the benefit of mature counsel, guiding them from damaging habits of preference or antipathy. Likes as the years go on become powerful factors in development; even as the simple dislikes of childhood may grow into habits which keep us

from much that is good. The careful mother becomes alert when she hears her child's "I don't like." There are dislikes to be taught. Dislike of damaging influences must of necessity be taught, and taught with emphasis; but the more likes we can add to life, the more frequently we can say and feel "I like," the greater will be our supply of comforts.

Both industrious and idle mothers are apt to overprotect their children from the exactions of duty. There is little danger of infringing the child-labour act in the modern home. A part of the play-life of even the three-year-old child should include simple duties teaching order. Too often the mother, practising the sin of unselfishness, develops a selfish, idle child, a child denied the lasting benefits of productive physical activity, a child whose mind drifts almost inevitably into sentimentalism and cheap romanticism, crowding out common sense and saving reality. Industry can be so early taught as to unconsciously become a habit which would set the seal of success upon many lives now destined to failure, and lay the foundations for happiness in lives now haunted by wretchedness.

Exaggerated self-love is as certain to blast the joy of living as the midwinter cold to blight the bloom of the hillside. Self-love early infects the spoiled child through the damaging teachings of doting, selfishly unselfish parents—parents lacking the will to deny their children those thousand harmful gifts which unknowing childhood begs; parents lacking the self-control to teach that vital quality to their children;

parents too devoid of moral courage to face the issue. To escape a scene, to avoid painful but wholesome and strength-producing discipline, they make concessions to their children's whims, concessions which early inculcate a fundamental disregard for law. All too frequently the home is one of double standards, one parent's requirements not being supported by the other, a disparity rapidly recognised by the average child and seized upon by him to secure his own way. Few elements so quickly teach a double standard of living in the child himself—one to meet his father's requirements, another for his mother's. And so, early in childhood, disregard for accuracy and truth and disrespect for authority enter to add to the jangle and conflicts of adjustment, to multiply standards of conduct, and, at the same time, to lower all standards.

Another far-reaching home influence, harmful in its productiveness of nervous disorders, is the unwise management by parents of the inevitable little pains incident to childhood hurts. There are pains —big ones—to which every worthy parent will give quick and feeling sympathy, but the large number of little pains and minor discomforts of daily bumps, falls and knocks, are usually weakly and even harmfully utilised; whereas each one of them should be an opportunity for growth of control, development of resistance and means of strength. The average nervous household lives on the *qui vive,* ready to jump and rush to the rescue in response to every wail; and tension begets tension, and attention begets

wails. Such harmful care can only develop exaggeration, and the cries multiply, often becoming more and more unreasonable under the influence of this injudicious attention. The true sympathy that saves is the sympathy which breeds early self-help in the child, and few more valuable lessons are taught our children than those which lead them to rub their own bumps, to extricate themselves from their own little difficulties, and through all to acquire a tolerance of the disagreeable. All must meet with difficulties. The average child is so protected as to consider a difficulty a disaster. The properly-reared child learns to meet the disagreeable as a matter of course, a thing to be faced and overcome. Children so trained early develop a reserve of control sufficient to put many of their elders to shame.

All children are unconscious imitators. Just as during childhood days we are particularly prone to infection by contagious diseases, so are all children subject to psychic infection. Impatience, irritability and injustice are distinctly damaging influences, influences which shock the delicate sensibilities of youth. Yet they are defects of conduct early acquired, defects which may become habitual long before maturity, and which are almost vitally damaging to nervous stability. These infections produce a fundamental hurt, essentially productive of nervous disorder. They stand for overreaction to inadequate causes, and when this habit has become fixed, it proves a constant drain upon nervous vitality.

Fear is absolutely necessary in the development of

the normal mind: fear of that which will harm, fear of filth or evil. But the great mass of fear found in the mind of the average child is but a damaging possession, the result of ignorant or vicious or heartless training. Childhood fears are not instinctive. They are all acquired. The child does not dread the fire until he has been burned. The little one knows nothing of the terrors of the dark until some enemy of his peace has disturbed his rightful faith and serenity with imaginary horrors. It is just as easy to teach a child love for insects and the harmless creeping and crawling things of nature as to fill its mind with useless and harmful dreads and antipathies. Every parent should be alert to know his children's fears, and quick to dispel all vagueness and to explain away all imaginary sources of terror. He should teach his child to face his fears, to love the dark, to sleep alone, and to feel that the unknown world is peopled with spirits of the good and not of evil. The fear-distraught child is the child of careless, ignorant or heartless home training.

The parents' influence in developing the moral element in the child-life is profound. There are two hurtful extremes. To evolve a wholesome thought-life, all influences which tend to the development of the spirit of malevolence must be thoughtfully avoided. The wise parent will never allow his child to hear unkind criticism or comment of any one. Child nature may early be influenced to think evil; to think evil is to feel evil, and to feel evil is to have within a bit of soul-poison. The other extreme,

while far less offensive in its results, is equally damaging to the individual. Unbending rigidity in training, a relentless hectoring of the child-life with rules and regulations, and permitting no development of personality, if it does not produce an ultimate daredevil recklessness, will result in a morbid conscientiousness which stands for unending strife and fear. Such conscientiousness produces unrelenting self-analysis, checks real growth, warps and contracts and narrows the joy of life. A taste of liberty, a bit of license, a wee bit of wrong-doing make for ultimate salvation.

Education.—Sooner or later, the influence of parents is shared by the teacher, and a rich opportunity is given him to impress the benefits of his own personality upon his students. Dull or perverted indeed is the pupil who does not feel the keen, moving stimulation of some early teacher's influence, and unfortunate indeed is the scholar who cannot look back on one or more of his teachers as having slipped into his character some principles which have stood and continue to stand for a stronger, better self. Inevitably, unless he is hopelessly defective, as the child associates at school with a score or more of others representing a wide variety of home training, consciously or unconsciously he is drawn toward staple habits of conduct and thought. Influence of child upon child and teacher upon all is potent for good or evil. The very fact that one attempts to teach presupposes a special preparation and ability for wholesome, strengthening child-training; but the

common ignorance of educators in schools and academies, and even in colleges, of the fundamental laws governing normal mental development, and especially of those equally fundamental laws which underlie mental disorder, is appalling. Children of a certain grade are forced to attain certain standards, are forced into a certain mould, and expected to be transformed thereby. Individual needs and defects, hereditary tendencies, and the weaknesses of faulty home training are but vaguely recognised. It is "Make your grade," "Attain this standard," at any cost, and the teacher who is able to pass the largest percentage of his students is accorded best, even though his pupils may have been stimulated and forced by rewards or demerits to build upon defective foundations.

The higher the grades, the more intense is the forcing process. In high school, and more decidedly in college, many pupils are mechanically grinding through their tasks, remembering masses of facts for examination day. Straining, struggling and striving in the face of hazy mental living, many students acquire a store of superficial knowledge, and at the same time damage their minds through chronic mental indigestion, an indigestion which can only produce an early mental exhaustion; inattention alternates with spasmodic spurts of strained attention, as the pupil victim ebbs and flows onward through his forced process of learning. In the system in vogue throughout our land, facts are piled upon facts, instead of careful, rational teaching of principles and

insisting upon the development of reason and not of mechanical memory, of the acquisition of truth and not the accumulation of knowledge. There is much education which does not educate; education which crams the mind with glittering superficialities and generalities; education which under analysis shows defect after defect in mental construction; education which does not develop the will and reason, which stand for strength and character, for truth and resistance. There is education which all too often breeds an excess of individualism, based upon a snobbery of learning. The burden of education is increasing with the years, with the multiplication of sciences and the demands of educators who, in their pride of scholastic standards, have long since forgotten the needs of the scholar, and ignorantly or arbitrarily employ methods which are not only multiplying our neurotics, but are increasing the proportion of the insane holding college degrees at an alarming rate. Much education, especially in our higher women's colleges, stands for an intensity of application, for prodigious expenditure of unrelenting effort through the formative years of life, carried out in utter disregard of the individual needs or weaknesses of the student. As a result, thousands of inadequate minds are annually being sacrificed on the altar of higher education.

## CHAPTER V

### EATING ERRORS

**Relation of Food to Body.**—There are a few conditions in the individual's life which he is powerless to modify, or at best is limited in his ability to control. Man is a passive being from the viewpoint of his heredity and the influence of his earlier surroundings. Otherwise he is, or should be, his own master, and few there are who can justly contemn Fate for the total discrepancies of their lives; for many weaknesses ascribed to heredity, and more deficiencies charged to our early training, can slowly but certainly be eradicated, supplemented, or adjusted by rational and resolute living. In the chapters which follow, those numerous elements in the art of normal living which play an essential part in the production, prevention, or cure of nervous suffering will be practically discussed. In dealing with these important, these vital questions of living, the individual is an independent, active agent. In the large majority of lives, when all has been said, we discover that man, through his ignorance or indulgence, has been his own worst enemy. But the laws producing nervousness are now becoming so well understood, and most nervous sufferers are so subject to distinctly helpful influence, that he is deficient indeed who cannot

be rescued if he will but earnestly and sincerely learn, and having learned, honestly and persistently do.

No conception of man's nervous needs is adequate which does not consider his physical, mental and moral natures, and no study of nervously suffering man is just which does not recognise the unity of his nature, and the intimate, unceasing interrelation of body, mind and soul. In the following pages the essential principles damagingly affecting him physically, mentally and morally, with the fundamental principles upon which rests health or cure, will be studied.

Man's body is a marvellously constructed engine. It takes in carbon in the form of food, and oxygen through his lungs, and in the substance of the billions of living cells which constitute his tissues the carbon and the oxygen combine to produce heat and energy. In the healthy body, the relation between the amount of possible force in a given weight of food and the amount of energy derived from that food shows a perfection of utilisation which is the marvel and the envy of the mechanical engineer, unknown in any man-made machine. No other animal is able to make use of so large a variety of foods. Flesh of beast, fish and fowl, leaves of trees, the nests of birds, fruits and flowers, roots and stalks, the juices and the oils of trees and shrubs, the salts of the sea, the minerals of the earth—all come to his table; and various and complex manipulations change, modify and blend this great variety of food materials into ten thousand

dishes to please his palate. Many men, many women, many children live to eat, so this potent engine labours unceasingly—never stopping in some of its activities throughout the entire span of life—to care for the unending variety of foodstuffs thrown into it for its fuel and its consumption.

Through the untold ages of man's history food material was so simple and limited that humanity was forced to strive and toil to attain a sufficiency. The great-grandparents of most of us were still following the Biblical injunction, and earning their bread by the sweat of their brows. Of how few of their descendants is this true to-day, even in a small part! Food is abundant, and the luxuries of a generation past are plentiful. A few syllables uttered to our servant, Electricity, and lo! a banquet such as Solomon in his glory never knew, is before us. The iced cocktail contains fruit from the Isle of Pines and cherries from Spain; the stock of the bouillon grew on the plains of Texas and comes frozen from the abattoirs of Chicago; the relishes are from Russia's inland seas or the sunny shores of Italy, the fish from the coasts of Newfoundland or the waters of the Pacific; the fowl was flying last week over the marshes of the Northwest; the roast was reared with hothouse care on the great farms of the Middle West; the punch is flavoured with spirits from the Caribbean; the peas are from France, the potatoes from the far-off State of Washington, the corn from Maine; and the salad is prepared from crisp, green stuff expressed from Florida, dressed with oils from

France and seasoned with condiments from Turkey and Prussia; fruit has been brought from Persia, coffee from Brazil, cigars from Cuba, and wines rich and old from Spain and the Rhine. Thus our dinner! And the sated diner rises with a shrug indicating the commonplace. Steam, electricity and gasoline have brought the world's market to our door, and poor is the family which does not daily enjoy foods which a generation since were considered only possible for the wealthy. High living is becoming a matter of course, and the demands of the palate are multiplying even faster than the ability of art and the industry of commerce to satisfy them.

It would seem that only a miracle-working engine could select from this infinite variety of foodstuffs that which could be used by the body; but in the midst of this apparent chaos of intricacy Science slowly but certainly discloses her simple operative laws; ten thousand foods are but multiples of four primary food elements. Scientifically considered, the digestive apparatus has to deal only with the proteins, such as meats and a few vegetables, including beans; the carbohydrates, that is, the various forms of starch and sugar and their numerous combinations; and the hydrocarbons, which include the oils and fats of vegetable or animal source. These three organic groups, with the inorganic substances which are called the salts, and water, comprise the entire range of edibles and drinkables as seen by the eye of Science. Simply considered, the most important chemical element of the three organic groups

is carbon. In the boiler of the heating plant, wood, coal, paste-board, leather, rubber, waste material from a hundred industries may be used to produce heat. Simply speaking, the carbon is the element which burns. Carbon is the chemical which, uniting with the oxygen of the air, produces the heat to furnish comfort and power. And so, practically, man scours the seven seas with his commerce, haunts the recesses of the wilds, ploughs and cultivates and sprays and prunes for ten thousand foods, to the end that he may furnish his body with a bit of carbon, that it may be comfortable and have the force to do. Just as certainly as the steam boiler works more perfectly, produces with more certainty a dependable quantity of heat and power when fired with wood or coal than it possibly can when stuffed and cluttered and choked with the trash of a hundred industries; so the human furnace operates more perfectly with moderate, simple feeding than it possibly can when stuffed and cluttered, yes, and poisoned with food-trash of a hundred provinces.

**Food Damage.**—Every hour of life the tissues demand food. Through many generations our ancestors were forced by ever-impending starvation to constant food-seeking. Through necessity and cultivation the human palate has become a gormand, an insatiable gormand, and with individual and nation the days of plenty have been days of feasting, and gorging is common at social festivities of high and low. The human palate knows not reason. The puling infant turns from its natural food to the

sugar-teat, while Thomas Parr, one of England's oldest men, died a few hours after his 152nd birthday dinner, his king's guest, from over-eating. Few individuals are so blessed with a protective animal instinct that they do not need the help of educated reason to modify the demands of their palates. True scientific knowledge of the value and harm of foods, and the food needs of the body in health and disease, is of but comparatively recent acquisition. The volume of suffering, direct and indirect, and the toll of human illness and death growing out of errors in eating are too monumental for comprehension. Slowly, all too slowly, and not any too surely, the knowledge is growing that a shamefully large proportion of human ailments is the result of ignorance, indifference, or indulgence in eating; and all sorts of remedies are being introduced. The shelves of the pharmacist fairly groan with digestive aids, tablets and elixirs and wines and powders galore, all intended to let greedy man eat as he pleases, to relieve him of the immediate discomforts of his gluttony, to put off the evil day of reckoning. Food faddists have developed by the score. There are meat eaters—even raw meat eaters—and those whom eating meat "doth grievously offend." There is the uncooked food crank, while fearsome souls invest in fireless cookers that the food may cook all night. Some would restrict diet to nature's crude products, and feed mankind on fruits and nuts and herbs, while others teach that if you will but chew, and chew, and chew, it makes little difference what you chew.

Some condense their food to liquid and tablet form, some to wafers and buns guaranteed to educate their digestive tract "how to perform;" while still others fairly drown their interiors with imported waters of rare digestive quality—all of which says eloquently to him who thinks, that there is a world of discomfort growing out of the food question. All of these food faddists could only exist in the presence of a vastly larger number of food errors.

Medical Science has had so many problems to meet —problems involving tragedies of accident, infection and death-bearing contagion, problems which have only within the last generation been solved, problems which demanded the best of medical skill and science until they were mastered—that but recently has she turned her attention to the equally vital but less dramatic problem of diet. The day has now arrived when the individual's food needs can be accurately estimated, and diet directions of almost mathematical exactness be given. For some generations empirical efforts have been made to influence disease through diet, but even yet the great underlying principle of the relation of food to work is practically unconsidered by either physicians or laity. The fireman recognises that the best boiler steel will not withstand unwise firing; but to-day ministers, jurors, professors of philosophy and science, physicians, artists, and even our wives and mothers, are digging their graves with their teeth. One of the most marked tendencies of modern life is the rapid substitution of nervous for muscular work.

The food requirements for the day-labourer, the athlete, the trapper and the farmer are distinctly different from those of the professional man, the business man, the student and the housewife, but how few recognise this! The banker at forty-five is eating the buckwheat cakes and sausage, the fried potatoes and boiled ham, the mince pies and quince preserves that gave strength to his farmer father and to his own boyhood activities, and at forty-eight he is dead of Bright's. The Southern merchant knows nothing so good as the hot bread, yellow with soda, and saturated with its chunk of melted butter, swimming in "black-strap" or home-made sorghum, his vegetables soggy with greasy "pot-licker," his steaks cut thin and fried black in lard, buried in onions and burning hot with pepper. Mr. Merchant's financial successes are of little use, as at fifty he is a nervous wreck, hopelessly damaged by foods prepared by his negro cook—foods fitted for her and her field-hand husband. Active physical work with its constant using of muscular tissue, its demand for deep breathing and constant throwing off of poisons through the perspiration, requires rich foods, scientifically spoken of as highly-organised foods. For muscle-workers, meats, fats and richer sweets are practically essential—certainly rarely harmful; but for the nervous worker—and such are practically all our women, whose daily use of muscular force does not equal that of an active two-year-old child—foods of this nature are dangerous, and usually damaging.

Some individuals inherit exceptionally strong digestive systems. They eat heartily and apparently are never hurt by any excesses at the table—full-blooded, robust, usually good-natured, happy souls. The large surplus of food taken in but not used in active effort is cared for by remarkably competent organs of elimination. The liver, kidneys, skin and the muscles also carry the burden of garbage incineration so perfectly as to keep the system free from damaging accumulations. Such men and women are becoming less common. Their children do not usually inherit equal digestive strength. Unquestionably, there are humans who can eat recklessly and at will without apparent damage, but many of them go off suddenly at about sixty with a stroke. The doctor knows that something burst in the brain. Some boilers go the same way. In others food excesses pile up rapidly in the form of fat. It is surprising what a small amount of nutrition will furnish them all the necessary energy for their sedentary lives and still show a surplus in the form of many, many undesired pounds. One of the fortunate individuals is he whose stomach rebels and continues to rebel at its misuse and abuse. Its owner fairly curses it for its protest. He blames it morning, noon and night for its faithful efforts to tell him that he has been seduced by his palate. It is a bit difficult, however, to impress the average dyspeptic with a due sense of gratitude to his protesting stomach. If he but knew, he is fortunate. He is being warned daily—and chronic stomach indiges-

tion is not fatal. Too often this organ meekly does its part, grinding away like some insensate machine, and passing on to the intestines material for which the body has absolutely no need. Many men and women, generally intelligent, who have suffered for years from unrecognised stomach indigestion, will speak with pride of their ability to eat anything. "I have the digestion of an ostrich; nothing ever hurts me," they will say when fairly reeking with the poisons of food decomposition in the intestinal tract. Now and then, in the more sensitive make-up, chronic loss of appetite, even aversion to food, is an indication of the great damage which has already been done by errors in eating.

A more or less crude understanding of the condition of chronic self-poisoning, technically termed autointoxication, has entered the minds of most magazine readers. Hazy, and often distorted and inaccurate, the fears bred by this knowledge may be as harmful as the condition itself. The simple truth should be brought forcibly and clearly to all who would be well, that perfect health cannot be maintained without an intelligent regulation of the quality and amount of food and the nature and amount of exercise. When this balance is broken, the door is open for many of the ills to which flesh is heir—ills usually quite remote from any intimate connection with stomach, liver, pancreas or intestines. A number of the most chronic, distressing and disfiguring skin diseases are primarily the result of autointoxication, and the specialist has no

hope of treating them successfully save through a proper regulation of diet and exercise. Many sufferers from catarrhal conditions of the nose, throat and other mucous surfaces are paying a penalty for unwise food indulgence. The irritating poisons within the system have produced irritating secretions—the basis of these catarrhal inflammations. The army of the thin and bloodless, or sufferers from anæmia and malnutrition, are underfed through overeating. Excess of foods and wrong foods ferment or putrefy, and instead of wholesome, vitality and blood-producing elements being absorbed, daily doses of blood and tissue poison are taken up. "Biliousness" rightfully merits the gentle appellation of "hoggishness" far too often. The work of the liver is to further the process of digestion, to take from the food-material which has undergone stomach and intestinal digestion, elements which would be damaging to the system if allowed to circulate in the blood, and to convert these poisonous substances into bile, which is returned to the intestinal tract, a definite aid to normal digestion. In biliousness the liver has been overworked by the demands put upon it. It has failed to successfully convert all this toxic material into bile, and the patient is miserable and temporarily ill because he is poisoned by his own poisons, because he has overpowered the guard at the gate.

Again, autointoxication produces premature old age, which is manifested by an early hardening of the arteries, frequently resulting in apoplexy, with

death or paralysis. The large percentage of Bright's disease develops from damage to the kidneys through the constant irritation of the toxins which are but the logical result of food excess. When skin, liver arteries and kidneys suffer toxic damage, what is to be expected of the more vulnerable nervous system? The headaches and backaches, and not infrequently the wearing, nagging foot pains usually attributed to weakened arches, are but the appeals of nerves capable of evincing pain, protesting that their sensitive endings are being bathed in fluids unfit for health, announcing, with the emphasis of acute physical discomfort, that there is a secret enemy in the household. Much physical torture and intensity of suffering, criminally relieved by the deadening smother of morphin or other powerful drugs, are but agonised appeals of chronically irritated sensory nerves for less damaging food to corrode, or more oxygen to burn up these vicious poisons. And this is but a partial list of the suffering through eating errors.

The basis of all physical life is a substance called protoplasm, not unlike the white of egg. The chief part of the cells of the body, hence the bulk of the body itself, is composed of this substance. It is in the substance of the protoplasm that all physical and most chemical activities take place. The tears are formed by the protoplasm of certain special cells; the tireless beating of the heart is possible because of the living protoplasm in a different kind of cell. Thought and will and feeling are reactions which

take place in the protoplasm of highly specialised nerve cells. Chemically it has been found that a slight degree of alkalinity is essential to the normal life of this primary and vital tissue substance. A very slight change in the chemical reaction of the fluids of the body results in a disturbance of the well-being of the protoplasm. It is imperative that blood, lymph and other fluids which go to nourish and protect the body be always moderately alkaline in reaction. If the body fluids or tissues become even slightly acid, death of part, or death of body quickly results; and so, chemically speaking, health is possible only when the balance between the acids, and the bases, as alkaline substances are called, is delicately and accurately maintained. Excess of alkali and dominance of acidity are alike fatal. The latter condition is called acidosis, and the tendency of many food excesses is to decrease the alkalinity of the tissues and so to break that vital chemical balance which is necessary for health and even for life.

Every mouthful of food taken is a chemical influence. Some foods are base- or alkaline-forming; others, acid-forming. Meat is the most generally used of the proteid foods by our race. All meats are acid-producing. Of the carbohydrates, sweets in excess of the actual need of the system, and of hydrocarbons, overindulgence in fats or oils as well, result in overacidity. While the fatal condition of acidosis is rarely met, a modified form called subacidosis, in which there is a marked decrease in the alkaline reserve and a lessened ability of the tissues

to resist the damaging influence of acids, is a condition found in the average sedentary individual. Subacidosis is a logical, chemical basis for nervousness, whether manifested in the form of the torturing neuralgias and sensory pains referred to, or in the excessive nervous irritability which seems to make physical restlessness imperative and to rob the sufferer of muscular control, or in the form of the chronic weariness of nervous exhaustion. Whatever its manifestations, the physical damage of nervousness is practically always due to a self-intoxication in which the vital alkalinity of the sensitive protoplasm forming the nervous tissue has been reduced. This damage, to repeat a truth which should be shouted from the house-tops, may be avoided only by maintaining that essential chemical equilibrium possible through a correct balance of food and exercise, of fuel and draft in the furnace. Let us realise that it is not the meat we eat or do not eat, it is not the excess of sweets, bonbons, preserves or syrups, it is not the grease kneaded into our biscuit or fried into our steaks that maims, pains, weakens and finally kills, but it is the years of lack of balance between food and exercise, between fuel and fire; the difference between the clean, alkaline ash of complete oxidation and the clinkers and soot and acid smudge of the choked furnace with defective draft.

The inorganic substances taken with our food affect our well-being through the laws of physics, as well as through the laws of chemistry. The circulating fluids of the body must not only maintain a

specific chemical reaction, but a definite density. Water, while possessing no food value, is vitally essential to feeding, as no food which is not soluble can be used by the cells; and numbers of the most damaging poisons to the system are removed in the excretions, after being dissolved in water. Water is the indispensable vehicle for carrying food to the tissues, and for removing tissue waste. Protoplasm is quickly disorganised by pure water. A little more than one-half of one per cent. of ordinary salt, however, added to water makes a solution in which protoplasm thrives. Over seventy per cent. of the body weight is water—water containing six-tenths of one per cent. of salt. Silver and even gold are eagerly exchanged, weight for weight, for salt, in communities remote from adequate supply; for without salt fatal weaknesses soon supervene. On the other hand, excess of salt in food, or lack of water with food, increases the density of the fluids of the body, and interferes with many of the finer processes of nutrition. Consequently many suffer nervously, because through high seasoning their taste has become perverted, and they are constantly overusing salt. This damage would be greatly lessened if quantities of water were also taken, but underdrinking is a common fault of the nervous, particularly among women. The guest is rather exceptional with intuition so fine as to compliment the preparation of the food by accepting his host's standards of seasoning as his own. It is usually a shower of salt and a cloud of pepper on every dish, even before it has been tasted.

The habit of overseasoning has become so ingrained in many that all delicacy of taste and sensitiveness of palate have long since disappeared. The injury to stomach and kidneys is probably more practically harmful than the hurt to one's manners.

Tea and coffee in moderation can be cared for without harming the system of the average healthy person. They both contain a chemical substance—caffein—which in excess is a poison damaging alike to heart and nerves. Their effect in large quantities, like that of alcohol and tobacco, is to produce an artifical sense of adequacy, of ability, of strength; to temporarily eradicate the sense of fatigue. And the inadequate, the ones with the least reserve, in their impatient or ignorant seeking for that which will bring quick comfort, are usually the tea and coffee topers, enslaved by their so-called "temperance cups."

**Food and Morals.**—The day has now come when each individual can have the benefit of accurate scientific advice as to food restrictions. The rapid increase in the damage from errors in eating, with the perfecting of dietary knowledge, is hastening the day when an enlarging number of the nervous, particularly, will seek and follow saving counsel. Were the damage limited to the physical effects, the evils of eating should be sufficiently serious to arose the thoughtful to protective action; but just as alcohol sends its curse echoing through the generations, so food poisoning is adding its burden, a burden of mental and moral inferiority, to our race.

One of the earliest advances in necessary reformation will be made in the kitchen. The good housewife may select the food for her flock with all the wisdom of the physician prescribing for a critically ill patient, and have her plans for the strength and safety of her family wrecked by the cook. The abominations perpetrated under the name of cooking are legion. Overcooking will convert nutritious meats into modified raw-hide. Eggs emerge from some kitchens about as digestible as chamois-skin. Breads and pastries are served in a consistency differing little from putty. The delicacy of flavour and the nutrition is cooked out of soups, and the most delicate foods come to the table saturated with greases which have been rendered nutritionally impossible through overheating and the liberation of their fatty acids. Fruits and desserts are sticky with sugar; salt, pepper and other condiments are used in excesses which cause actual pain to the normal palate. Food so prepared is practically incapable of digestion by the normal stomach, until it is overstimulated by pepper or whipped up with alcohol.

Thousands of periodic drunkards begin a spree, unconsciously seeking in alcohol a temporary appease from the nervous harassings growing out of their inability to assimilate the unconscious criminality of the kitchen. The average wife of such an unfortunate would resent with indignation the charge that she was largely responsible for her husband's humiliating drunkenness. Not only does

ignorant cooking frequently produce the craving for alcohol, the demand for the soothing, either of nicotine or drugs, or the ever-returning call for the "pick-me-up" of strong tea or coffee, but it is to-day, and has been through generations, actively creating immorality. The relation between the immoral, and nervous instability, will aways be a close one. The old drunkard philosophised well when he complained, "The neighbours always talk of my drinking, but they never speak of my drought." He certainly knew the meaning of that depression, that craving, that insistent demand which autointoxication lays upon the nervously unstable.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PENALTY OF INACTIVITY

**Man Created for Activity.**—The problem of physical exercise did not concern primitive man. For him inactivity meant a prompt departure for the land of the unknown. Upon his strength, his agility, his speed, hung the thread of his precarious life. To him Nature said, "Work or starve, fight or die, run or be eaten." Archeologists are daily uncovering evidences of the almost unbelievable work of primitive man's hands; but the testimony of Egypt's pyramids and the stone cities of Peru discloses but a minute portion of his productive handiwork. "Fight or be killed,"—and with bare hands he wrestled with the beasts of the wilds; and with every man's hand at his throat it was for him to possess powerful, hardy muscles, or succumb. Ever hunted by biped, quadruped and crawling thing, with little protection in his cave home or stone shack, the future of many generations rested in his speed and endurance. The question of muscular exercise for our remote forefathers was well seen to by Mother Nature. Work, work, work has been the insistently reverberating cry of human necessity since things went wrong in Eden; and what a mass of it there has been and still is for man to do! In how magnifi-

cent a home of opportunities was he placed, and how superbly was he equipped in body and mind with capacities which have developed ability and energy rivalling that of his own ancient gods!

Our brawny ancestors endowed their children with physiques built largely of purposeful muscle. When we examine the body, we find it half muscle, unless overweighted with fat or shrunken and shrivelled by disuse or misuse—half muscle, and most of this active tissue is under the direct command of man's will. The voluntary muscles, when normal, are eager to do his bidding, and to perform for him an ever-increasing variety of productive and pleasurable movements. A Great Wisdom, however, was evidently concerned about man's tenure of earthly existence, and so placed certain vital processes requiring muscular movement in charge of the brain, yet independent of the conscious action of will. The ceaseless activities of the heart, the life-long throb of the blood-carrying vessels, much of the ebb and flow of breathing and of the necessary transfer of food from one department of digestion to another—these and other activities essential to human life take place through the action of the so-called involuntary muscles, subject to no direct control by the will.

But essential as muscular movement is to the carrying out of man's multiform activities, this remarkable tissue has other scarcely less important uses—uses unthought by the average mind. Food and oxygen are brought through the blood to the muscles, where they unite, producing heat and power. The

demand of the muscles is the legitimate call for a large part of the food actually needed by the human body, and muscle activity instantly and persistently demands an increased intake of oxygen. The muscle tissue is man's great consumer of food and air, which within the muscle cells are transformed into human energy. Muscle is not only the furnace ceaselessly turning food and air into warmth and power and reserve strength, but it is the body's incinerator, burning into harmless ash the nerve-nagging toxins which so quickly form through indulgence and inactivity. Much that would be noxious to brain, nerves and other delicate tissues of the body, is oxidized into harmlessness within the cells of healthy muscle tissue. From the standpoint of general health, of resistance to infection, of that rare chronic sense of strength and well-being, of the development of an increasing reserve of power, muscles properly fed and energetically used constitute the vitality-giving tissues of the body. Use is good for muscles. Many months before birth the tiny heart begins to pulsate, and seventy-five times a minute throughout life, its daily contractions representing the lifting force of a powerful engine, it works on and on, often continuing its faithful pulsating hours or days after other vital forces have ceased. The heart is but a hollow muscle, but all of man's victories rest in the tireless persistence of its action.

The relation of the will to the strength and development of the voluntary muscles is intimate. They remain soft, inactive, sluggish, an increasing

menace to his well-being, till commanded to act, to exert, to grow strong by work. The master man has attained much of his health, his independence of fatigue, his superiority to disease, his fearlessness in action, his resoluteness in decision, his calm confidence of conscious reserve, through the years of interaction of will, muscle and work. Man was created for activity—for a thousand, yes, for many thousand activities; and only in action, and rarely except in productive action, does he find the satisfaction which comes through the conscious fulfilment of purpose, and that gratified sense of completeness gained through accomplishment. Brain, will, muscle only attain their highest development and greatest power through use—earnest, active, intensive use.

In due time our ancient forefathers discovered easier ways of disposing of their enemies than by cracking their skulls with cobble-stones at short range; and since that eventful day man's wits have never ceased devising new means of tickling Nature into smiling productiveness, of killing his neighbour at longer and longer distances, until to-day, in the trenches of war, huge cylinders of steel vomit forth tons of explosives to destroy his unseen foe at the edge of the horizon. By one stab at the vitals of his sea-going palace a torpedo sends a thousand unconscious lives gurgling to death. Steam and electricity are whirling his engines of peace and war through space, across the continents and skimming the surface of the deep with the speed of the tornado. It seems that man's wit has made his muscle

of little importance. When ages ago, with a thong about its lower jaw he subdued the beast of the field, the pride of mastery and possession began its devitalising work of rendering him brain-proud. Since that day ever-increasing numbers have turned from the blessings of activity to the pride of indolence, and each century of brain-mastery has lessened the necessity for muscle use and increased the aristocracy of idleness; and humankind, still in its youth, still facing its hundreds of centuries of maturity, is growing tired. Tired men, tired women, tired children are about us. Tired faces greet us in the morning; tired voices complain through the work hours; tired and mirthless laughter is heard at the play. The penalty of generations of physical neglect is being exacted. Man is wearied, fatigued, exhausted, because he has not worked.

Fatigue Versus Exhaustion.—Within a short generation only have Science and educators raised the voice of authority against the certain evils of physical inactivity. The growing influence of wise counsel has multiplied gymnasiums in college, city and town, is popularising golf, tennis and other sports; while in more and more homes daily time is devoted to constructive physical activity. Herein exists a prediction that our grandchildren may find rest. There is much ignorance connected with our generation's weariness. Daily fatigue of muscle is the natural basis for appetite, sleep and strength. Daily fatigue is not only harmless, but so essential as to be moral. Food unearned through body ac-

tivity is a drug to the system; sleep which does not come as a reward of tasks earnestly done is often but an enervating period of insensibility; while no man or woman can know the keen joy of exuberant strength who has not felt the heavy, drowsing hand of fatigue. Normal fatigue is as harmless as the quiet of night, and the sober drapings of worthy weariness but hide the growing form of reserve of power. Energy surplus develops through those daily activities which mean acute, even sheer, physical fatigue. Thousands who complain of being chronically tired are but describing weakness. Their weariness is a weakness which has never been replaced by that strength which comes to many latter-day men and women only through consistent, persistent muscular doing. Fortunate is the intelligent man whose will commands that his fatigue be no excuse for inactivity. Normal muscular fatigue of the healthy body should be soon followed by a sense of well-being and eager buoyancy, which to possess is to half master the ills of life.

Most of the "tired" and "tired-out" are either chronic loafers of life or the nervously-exhausted sons and daughters of toxic or emotional excess; but "weariness" and "fatigue" are to-day terms much too mild to express their feelings. "Exhaustion"—"utter and complete exhaustion"—follows the trip to town shopping; exhaustion is the "morning after" result of the evening's entertainment; is the mistress' aftermath of a wordy misunderstanding with her servant; it follows as a shadow modern

under-developed lives through useful and useless activities. Muscular "exhaustion," even when quite complete, is rare, and seldom serious in its effects. Unaccompanied with mental or emotional disturbance, and in the absence of severe organic disease, recovery quickly follows the temporary incapacity of even extreme physical effort.

The offices of the neurologists are crowded with those who have come to seek relief for their nerves—relief chiefly for the damage done by "overwork." Among a hundred one may be found who has gone through years of pent-up drudgery, generously self-sacrificing, patiently striving to make ends meet, probably the while suffering from defective food oxidation. Most of the others are inherently weak because they have never developed power, or are poisoning their powers of endurance by excesses at the table or at the bar; or belong to that larger group daily scattering their strength broadcast by the friction of worry, or the devitalisation of fear, or the demoralisation of wrong-doing. Overwork, when work is rightly and wisely done, is truly a rare cause for neurasthenia, but nervous exhaustion is common; it is rife in our land. The normal nervous system may resist the damage of the accumulated poisons of inactivity or the energy-leakages of fear and worry through many years. Nervous exhaustion in the average person, even in the face of misuse, abuse or disuse, comes slowly; it is recovered from slowly. Normal muscular fatigue may be produced in a few minutes or hours, and disappears with a short period

of rest. The nervous system resists its surrender through the years, ofttimes until abuses have become habits—habits so insistent and clinging that in re-education alone may the neurotic find restoration.

**The Penalty of Inactivity.**—We have seen that muscle in the average man is half his body weight, a living tissue intended for active, energetic use—fifty to a hundred pounds of strength, vitality and joy-producing tissue if sanely cared for. But these same muscles hang to many modern bones sluggish, inert, weakness-producing masses of near-decomposition. Unused muscle tissue, like the unstirred water of the swamp, breeds within itself vitiating poisons. This same poison-infected swamp-water, allowed to dash down the mountain side, is soon lashed and oxidized into refreshing purity—even so may toxic muscles be purified by that use which daily wrings every drop of fluid from their structure, leaving them eager for constructive food and oxygen. The toxins of inactivity are akin to the toxins of food-indulgence, and these two poison groups account for much that makes man physically and nervously miserable, and go far to rob him of comfort and ambition, of ease of mind and peace of soul. Within these pounds of flesh abides a dynamo which, wisely operated, converts food into strength, yokes the carbon and oxygen into ever-returning power, and destroys to a vestige many lurking dangers. These pounds of tissue may be made man's open friends; in all too many bodies to-day they are his secret enemies.

Physical health should be but a simple matter. With the daily balancing of food and exercise all is well, and all should stay well through a long and comfortable span of useful years. But underused bodies and overused brains tell the story of a world of nervous suffering, tell the story of many incapacitating and pain-producing organic diseases, and should be the epitaph on many tombstones of those who die at forty-five and fifty. Ignorance, indolence, cheap pride, sentimentalism, excess of plenty, love of ease and the mastery of pleasure stand between man and the simple law of physical health, which commands that his muscles earn what he eats. The food necessary for nervous use is of the simplest kind. Such food in small amounts will supply all the requirements of brain, heart, lungs and glands. Active muscular work, however, calls for food of increased quality and quantity. He who keeps his great muscle bulk active and wholesome may humour his palate with reasonable impunity.

Though well-muscled individuals do go to pieces nervously through other causes than defective food oxidation, the majority of the nervous are muscularly defective. Scrawny muscles and flat chests are common with the nervous, and are almost constantly found in those who suffer from the "blues." A poorly developed chest means deficiency of oxygen and a consequent excess of toxin. Men and women whose flabby muscles have reecived but a small part of their possible development recruit the ranks of the nervous. Many reach maturity, full-grown and

practically muscleless, unconscious caricatures of the human physique. Bodies which have been pampered through the first twenty years of life, protected alike from heat and cold, work and developing play, nursed and coddled, too often contain a nervous system tense and distraught, capable of little but expressions of depression, sensitiveness to discomfort and awareness of the pains of existence. Many a girl is robbed in her early teens of much of her chance for lasting health and saving robustness through the carpings of Mrs. Grundy. Her skirts, the enemy of freedom of movement and action, are lengthened, and warnings from mother and maiden aunts doom her to restrictions of action and primness of conduct which early discount the promise of abundant health. To hide a few inches of stocking she becomes a slave of propriety, perchance a victim of muscular non-development. Women to-day are rare whose muscles have come into their fulness. How few are muscularly equipped to safely meet the burdens of maternity, or even the wear and tear of a life of self-support!

Some feminine men and the majority of modern women fail to prepare themselves for a life of merely average health through hardy muscles. Most men, through the out-door life and active sports, the rough-and-ready games and the give-and-take, fight-or-get-licked habits of boys, reach their majority with a fairly useful set of muscles. But the play habit, poorly developed in girls, is rapidly lost in men after twenty; and with an increasing number of

successful men practically all work of hands or body is discontinued by middle age, and physically, the remaining days are spent in the midst of the violence and excitement of the "tabby-cat life." By forty the average woman is exercising with little but her tongue, and the average man with little but his teeth. There were gods in olden days who sat on old Olympus. To-day there are the voices of Science. Even as Jove struck the jeerer of his powers with sudden death, so to-day the presumptuous mortal who, through decades of physical indolence and inactivity, jeers at the unalterable truths of Science, jeers at a fate which may strike as suddenly and relentlessly as did mythic Jove.

Fat, flabby and forty is written across many a satisfied, vapid, characterless face; while lean, wrinkled and wizened, distorted by years of wasted agitation, those other unhappy faces of neglected oxidation haunt us with their restless misery. Both types are suffering from oxygen hunger. One puffs and waddles through life, doughy with useless fat. The other fusses and fumes, irritable and irritating, knowing and giving no hour of comfort, chronically, miserably, painfully toxic. Neither has ever done any real breathing, for real breathing is done in the muscles. The air enters the lungs and gives up its oxygen to the blood, because it is seeking for the food carbon in the tissues, and the bulk of our tissue is muscle. Most brain-workers—and such are most of us—ministers and clerks, lawyers and stenographers, doctors and merchants, artists and editors,

contractors and watch-makers, have no necessity for muscle use. Fed and clothed and enriched through their wits, they steadfastly ignore the call of their biceps. Seeking home and rest for the weakness which is theirs through non-development, buying pills for their pains, for years they creep along the uncertain margin separating their precarious health from nervous wreckage.

Whether the cause of one's defective homage to the rational demand of his muscular system be due to the futile pride in inactivity, common to cheap aristocracy, or to the even less worthy inertia of indolence, a constant danger of will damage lurks behind habitual muscular inactivity. Flabby wills often cling to flabby muscles. Many there are, idly busy, occupying themselves with small things, selfishly small things—playing at work, deceiving themselves and perchance some others into the belief that they are really useful and industrious. They belong to that strange class with great ideas but small duties—those whose converse promises much, whose hands do little, whose ideals soar, whose fingers dabble; or to that almost equally satisfied type whose occupation consists in preoccupation. Whichever the form of high thinking and low doing, the saving, developing sense of reality, that genuine human relationship with facts and truth, is dimmed, even destroyed. Serious investigation into the nature and character of man reveals the truth that he was created for productive activity. Nature suggests man's immortality by frequently delaying the pen-

alty of the individual's neglect of her laws, but in the life of the individual himself, or in that of his offspring, her revenge is sure and bitter upon those who ignorantly or persistently defy her laws of activity.

## CHAPTER VII

### EATING FOR EFFICIENCY

What to Eat.—The person is rare who has not recognised self-damage from unwise eating. It may have been but acute indigestion with its burning sour stomach and nausea, or the more miserable sick headache, or the acute, relentless stabs of abdominal pain; or again, the physical heaviness and sluggishness, the mental dulness and inertia which proclaimed harmful indulgence. These acute expressions when accepted as penalties may become the incentives to resolutions to avoid this or that food upon which the suspicion rests. But the more insidious effects, the evils of chronic food-poisoning—the autointoxications, the subacidosis, the anæmia, the malnutrition, the restless, sleepless nights, the irritable, fretful, impatient days with the inability to relax and to know repose, the nerve-racking neuralgias—these and kindred hosts come to many, the absolutely unrecognised results of eating errors. And each ill and pain robs the sufferer of efficiency, discredits the pleasure of living and discounts personal usefulness. Strength of muscle, keenness of intellect, breadth of judgment, beauty of ideation, tenderness of sympathy, are all dependent for their proper expression upon a normally active nervous system. But

the man who is on edge, oversensitive, questioning his own strength, poorly administers his muscle, his intellect and the expression of heart, mind and soul. We have already seen the serious menace to physical wholeness and nervous stability which abides in the defective handling of food by the tissues of the body. The principles have been repeated and emphasised that food and work, carbon and oxygen, must be balanced; that herein, roughly but unequivocally speaking, rests the chemical basis of nervous efficiency; and nervous efficiency is human efficiency.

What to eat? What vistas of thought and what possible answers this query suggests! As these words are written for men and women living in the midst of twentieth century plenty, men and women whose choice alone can constitute the answer, the question is practically simplified, and for them the answer should be found in the voice of reason. But reason is assailed on the subject of food by many teachers. When we recall our axiom that it is not what we eat, but what we eat that is not utilised that does us harm, we readily see that varying individuals with varying inheritances, following divers occupations, may eat the rankest extremes of foods and thrive, and by their very health advertise a multitude of diets and menus. It will be several decades before numerous intricate problems of the chemistry of the body are adjusted to the complex chemistry of foods, and not until that time will teachers be in agreement. The teachings of this chapter have grown out of a quarter century of careful study and

intimate experiences with the relation of food to nervous well-being, and while the suggestions contained might not meet with favour at a football training table, would raise a storm of protest in a logging camp, and be turned from with disdain by the hardy, ravenous, harvest hand, yet much of lasting good will be found by men and women whose life's usefulness and efficiency is being robbed by nervousness.

For too many years the nervous sufferer has not asked himself, "What shall I eat?" It has always been, "What shall I take?" So drugs have multiplied to lull discordant nerves into a night's repose —drugs which could not feed, could not strengthen, could only stun. Not recognising the intimate relation between food and suffering, many of the nervous have grown less reasonable and more impatient, more insistent, more demanding about their food, the appetite being the only voice at the feast to which they have listened; and the appetite is for most of us a creation of habit, the product of youthful training. This mentor at our table is too frequently but an ignorant, uninstructed desire, ever asserting, "I want what I want when I want it." Let the stall-fed ox break into the field of green corn, and the farmer is in haste to drive him out, to save him from death by "foundering," through the call of the "natural appetite." Yet even enlightened to-day finds us as a nation following the untutored leading of our appetites, not often to sudden death, but to undervalued lives and to curtailed lives. Normal appetite is a blessing. The zest for food is one of

the joys of life; but it is easily misled, rapidly becomes confused in the midst of excess, and is quite certainly perverted as the result of disease. The farther man departs from the serenity of the primitive life, the more certainly he must rely upon cultured reason, and the less safe does he become under the leadings of desire.

Appetite normally reaches a stage of almost irresistible intensity, especially in the boy, during the period of rapid growth and development between thirteen and seventeen. Youth and maid at this time need food, increased quantities of food; and the demand is so urgent that almost anything to eat is good, just so there is enough of it! During these ravenous years eating habits are largely formed, and often through the future years those dishes "which mother made," probably quite fit and proper for the robust, energetic boy, stimulate the business or professional man or the housewife to food excesses, because of the lasting influence upon appetite of those joyous food associations of youth. Years after the foods needed by the growing body are no longer safe because of changed habits of life, they continue to tickle the palate—and this is as far as the average eater thinks. Particularly fatal is that appetite earned by the youth in the gymnasium, in field sports, in the factory or on the farm, which he adopts as his counsellor in the sedentary after-years; and this single defect in rational eating annually accounts for tens of thousands of untimely deaths in the higher ranks of success and usefulness. It would seem

that in a matter so vitally connected with health, efficiency and comfort, physician and intelligent layman would be keenly alive to the situation, but the eating abominations go on unrecognised and devastating. In so many departments of life we are looking for and demanding the latest knowledge. Progress and improvement are the order of the day, system is being introduced into factory and office and home that life may be more productive, and yet we eat what we want, many of us never getting away from the food desires and antipathies formed in our youth, and passing on to our children the same thoughtless methods.

**Dietary Perversions.**—The appetite may be as unreasonable in its dislikes as in its desires: "I can't eat turnips;" "I don't like buttermilk;" "My appetite does not call for that kind of diet;" "My mother never could eat eggs;" "I got sick on fish once, and never have tasted any since." Who is free from some food antipathy not an outgrowth of true knowledge, not based upon the laws of nutrition, but the result of a whim, a prejudice or an accidental dislike? It is common in the treatment of serious nervousness to hear the patient assert his inability to take milk. His mother before him could not drink milk, and he had to be weaned before he was a year old because milk disagreed with him. He does not recognise that he is confessing a fundamental digestive deficiency. Of all known constructive foods, milk is the simplest, the most innoxious, the most responsive to normal digestion; and to be

unable to handle this simple food indicates a perversion which should cause him to seek counsel. Health will improve hand in hand with the ability to comfortably subsist on milk, and there is no one who cannot be readily taught to benefit by an addition of milk to his diet, if he will displace antagonism and preconceptions by determination (and Vichy!).

It is unfortunate that man's mind is able, even though dimly and inaccurately, to keep track of what is going on in his stomach. Particularly unfortunate is this for the nervous sufferer. We have recognised that there is no sensation which may not be an expression of nervous oversensitiveness. Attention to any organ or part only increases our consciousness of its condition and actions. Nervous indigestion so frequently referred to is not in itself a disease. It is but a localised expression of general nervous inadequacy. The nervousness of nervous indigestion is but the patient's oversensitiveness and increased consciousness of what is occurring in his digestive tract, although very often these sensations are increased by the food decomposition of auto-intoxication or the overacidity of fermentation, for in most instances the nervous patient is a sufferer from defective digestive force. The damage to the patient's nerves growing out of his unwise attention to and concentration upon his stomach and intestines is frequently only less hurtful than that resulting from the food-intoxication. The neurotic's study of what is going on below his diaphragm is of a most disconcerting and depressing character, and

his investigations but add fuel to his nervousness.

There are few nervous dyspeptics who do not early learn the air-swallowing habit—the habit of gulping down a mouthful of air and immediately forcing it back in an effort to relieve a heaviness of the stomach. Those having the habit usually protest with emphasis that they do *not* swallow air, that they are just relieving the stomach of gas, which forms in such quantities that five to thirty minutes are spent after meals "getting rid" of it. Nine-tenths of this so-called gas is nothing but swallowed air, gulped down and belched up, a habit easily acquired by humans and horses, and which in the quadruped knocks a cool hundred off his value. The physician who attempts to assist his patient in overcoming this miserable habit usually meets with indignant protests, and with resentment in old offenders who have been playing with their stomachs in this way for ten or twenty years. Some air is always swallowed with food, and in mixing in the stomach acid and alkaline foods, some gas will certainly be formed. The amount of this, however, is comparatively small, and will be spontaneously expelled. The habit of churning air in and out of the stomach is one which proves inevitably damaging.

Other nervous dyspeptics complain that everything they eat sours. Again we discover that they have been telephoning to their interior when they should have been paying attention to the singing of the birds and the washing of the dishes. But when the wise doctor assures them that a normal stomach

is sour, he is usually thought, if not called, a fool. Yet he is right. The gastric juice is literally as "sour as vinegar." It contains hydrochloric acid, and the man whose stomach lacks this intensely sour acid is in a bad way. But another says: "My stomach is as sour as vinegar and as bitter as gall. I cannot conceive that this is a natural condition." Yet the daintiest morsel of the breast of the quail must become "as sour as vinegar and as bitter as gall," or the stomach has failed in its duty. All protein foods, when normally acted upon by the gastric juice, are converted into an acid, sour, intensely bitter fluid called peptone. Air-swallowers are very prone, in their mischievous manipulations of their internals, to bring up portions of partially or completely digested food, sour and bitter; thoroughly convinced that everything inside is hopelessly and totally wrong, they pile in soda mints or digestive elixirs to correct an already normal digestion.

There are sour stomachs which stand for fermentation and not for normal digestion. Excesses in most sweets frequently result in a sourness which is vinegar in truth, while in the overloaded stomach the oils and greases may undergo changes similar to those which occur in the formation of rancid butter, liberating irritating and damaging acids. Let the poor sufferer cease his unpleasant, ignorant and harmful investigations of his stomach, and realise that gas and acid and bitterness are normal in the healthiest and strongest during digestion. These same unwise and inquisitive peepers into Nature's

business are apt to make the eventful discovery that they cannot drink milk without its being turned into curds. Neither could Adam (if he got any), nor Ham, nor Moses, nor Napoleon, nor the healthiest baby nor the biggest-muscled athlete. Nature provides the stomach with a special secretion having no other purpose than to curdle milk into nice, fine curds, which melt in the normal gastric juice as a snowflake on the cheek of health. The amount of damaging anxiety which comes to mothers of normal babies who, in the midst of health and plenty and unseasonable shakings, gurgle and smilingly laugh out a mouthful of soft curds, is only surpassed by the self-harm done by self-centred grown-ups who have paid more attention to their stomach's business than to their own.

So again a little knowledge becomes a dangerous thing. A few misinterpreted truths and food superstitions limit and pervert the eating habits of thousands of our otherwise intelligent and progressive neighbours. Too many of the nervous do daily homage at the altars of their stomachs that would put to shame the zeal of the Hindoo devotee before his clay god. Sooner or later all should wisely adjust the balance between food and work, but the nervous should be advised with emphasis either to remain profoundly ignorant of any knowledge of their digestive processes, or to seek and be guided by wise professional counsel. From our previous discussion it should be clear to the victim of nerves that through a wise choice of food he may materially assist in

overcoming his nervousness. He will recognise the necessity of making some definite changes in his eating habits, of substituting likes for dislikes, and of emphasising his self-mastery through denial.

## CHAPTER VIII

### EATING FOR EFFICIENCY—Continued

**Right Use of Sweets.**—The first nutritional damage which later develops nervousness most frequently has its origin in the abuse of sweets. This type of food, when needed, is one most quickly and economically converted into energy. Most of the sweets are readily soluble, and the digestive processes necessary to prepare them for the tissues are comparatively simple. Through the ages, however, sweets were relatively rare. Honey and the fruits were sufficient to provide mankind with but a small percentage of what he could have profitably and healthfully used, and so the desire for sugar acquired an intensity which is now a human characteristic. Within recent generations, only, have systematic planting and improved processes of agriculture, with economical methods of extraction and purification, rendered this food, once worth its weight in silver, as cheap as the proverbial dirt. Never had mankind so bountiful a supply of sweets, and never so little need for this form of food as to-day.

The inherited love of sweets is so strong, the evidences of the joy they bring our children so obvious, and the deliciousness of the multiplied forms in which they are now prepared so unquestioned, that it

is small wonder that children, large and small, are overfed with them. Sugar in endless variety tempts young and old at every turn, though needed only in limited amounts by the muscle-worker, and in decidedly less quantity by children and all who are living lives of nervous and mental activity. The damage from abuse of this appealing and seductive food may be far-reaching. Sweets in excess may keep the entire digestive tract in a state of acidity, an acidity which provides the soil for the growth and development in the small intestines of germs which normally have no place in the body excepting in the lower bowel. Thus through excessive eating of sweets many children grow into maturity with their intestinal digestion perverted through years of overindulgence in candy, cakes, syrups, oversweetened fruits, cereals and "what not." Girls of the boarding-school age in their budding loveliness are the natural objects of love missiles—delectable two- and five-pound boxes of chocolates and bon-bons. To eat before bedtime a half-pound of the richest sweets that can be devised by the confectioner's art is no stunt for our modern maid. Yet she has swallowed a half-pound of highly concentrated food, useless in producing constructive tissue, but capable of elaborating force and heat—sufficient food to provide the strength and bodily warmth necessary for two days' arduous labours for a Chinese coolie. What is the effect of such masses of high-potency foods in the undeveloped digestive organism of the brain-working girl but to waste digestive force, to clog the organs

of elimination, to slowly but surely corrode the vital machinery?

A certain ignorant conception of sweets places them as the opposite of acids. Sweet is certainly the antagonist of sour as recorded by the palate, but the palate knows no chemistry. The citric acid of the lemon, orange and the grapefruit becomes an alkaline citrate in the fluids of the body, if given a decent chance. But the palate says the grapefruit is acid and the sugar is sweet, therefore, neutralise the sour of the grapefruit by the sweet of the sugar. We have already learned that excess of sugar, sweet though it may be as it slips between palate and tongue, deliciously succulent, as a matter of fact rapidly becomes vinegar if taken in excess. Many who for years have denied themselves the morning orange or grapefruit because of its objectionable "acidity" will find that this will disappear if they eat their fruits unsweetened by sugar—this, of course, provided they can accept the statements of science on this question, because when all has been said and done, the nervous sufferer is largely controlled by his beliefs; and we have just seen that he can always find acid in his stomach, if that will prove his case.

Living lives of muscular disuse and nervous stress as most of us do these days, with sweets offered us in such excess of our real needs for even so valuable a food, it would be well for us to adopt a few simple rules for our protection. One spoonful or one lump to the cup of tea or coffee, none on our cereal, and the

avoidance of fruit that is not sufficiently sweet to be eaten unsugared, candy only in the place of dessert and the avoidance of all richly sweetened dishes—these restrictions will help much in our fight for efficiency. Many youthful ills would not appear if children were protected from the formation of the sweet crave, at least until the secondary muscular development of puberty provides the furnace needed. A few weeks of resolute self-denial on the part of any one seriously desiring to escape the mastery of sweets—for this abuse develops a craving not unlike that for tobacco or alcohol—will result in a gratifying realisation of the rapidity with which the appetite will learn to enjoy moderately sweetened foods. A child properly reared in reference to this question never suffers from that intense eagerness, that almost insatiable crave, which by many is considered a command of the appetite asserting a need. Prolonged misuse of the sugars and under-exercise frequently results in one of the most miserable forms of autointoxication, spoken of by physicians as "green bile cases," in which even the gall-bladder and ducts of the liver have become infected by the same germs, which could not have developed in the upper intestines had it not been for the years of sugar-produced overacidity. Such patients are particularly subject to periodic attacks of mental depression. Their multiplied pounds of sugar have failed to sweeten their dispositions.

Let nothing which has been said in reference to the abuse of sweets be taken as an objection to the legiti-

mate use of a reasonable amount of this food by all who exercise. An earned dessert is a most wholesome and welcome addition to the meal. Even to active, growing children, sweets should not be given except in small amounts, and after other wholesome food has been taken. The sugar-eating habit is particularly in evidence in those homes where children are allowed to "piece" between meals on cakes, cookies, candies and preserves; and this habit in children, as well as in adults, rapidly displaces the desire for more simple, wholesome foods.

Right Use of Proteids.—The second modern eating error which wrecks nerves is the misuse of the protein foods, especially the abuse of meats. The growing child needs protein, not necessarily in the form of pork and beef, as simpler and less damaging proteins are found in milk, eggs and vegetables. All muscle workers must have protein in some form to replace tissue, as this is the only food which can replenish the protoplasm of the cell, and in all activities of the body, cells are being destroyed and must be replaced by new ones. The controversy over the use and abuse, the value and damage, of a meat diet, is an old one. Its advocates point with conviction to the energetic, meat-eating Caucasians as being the world-conquerors, and compare the strength and aggressiveness of the carnivorous lion and tiger with the docile meekness of the vegetarian donkey and lamb. The opponents of meat point with equal conviction to the hardihood and endurance and the ability and the capacity of certain branches of the rice-

eating yellow race, to the strength and longevity of the elephant, and darkly hint that the explanation of the rapid increase in appendicitis and cancer will ultimately be laid at the door of much meat-eating. We shall not pretend to decide this question for the man in the street, but for the nervous sufferer a few definite truths may be educed.

Our long-lived forefathers, whose brawn and muscle pushed back the frontier state by state, wringing from the reluctant wilds a halting sustenance, using their wits some, their physical forces much, lived and thrived upon a diet largely of meat; and our fathers believed in meat, and we were reared on meat. But our fathers were not quite so comfortable as the frontiersmen, and we are trying to avoid nervous wreckage. Unlike the damage from sugars, the harm from meat-eating rarely comes in youth. Meat properly prepared, in reasonable amounts, is well appropriated by the growing body. The danger comes in later years. With the small amount of tissue destruction in the comparatively inactive lives of business and professional men, meat becomes a drug in early maturity. Good digestion and good kidneys will take care of it for many years, but meat is an acid-producer, and unmerited red meats, especially, are subject to decomposition in the intestinal tract in all who have not aggressive stomach digestion; and such digestion is rarely long enjoyed by those who are not earning it by muscle work. This particular decay of meats, common in the middle-aged and old who indulge in excess of this type of food, is

evidenced by a breath which is distinctly characteristic and offensive. For the man who would be truly effcient in counting-house and office and study and pulpit, reduction in the amount of meat, even the elimination of all meat, may be instituted as a definite step toward conservation of strength and increase of health and nervous comfort. That unreasoning tyrant, the appetite, will resent this change, and the resolution must be strong if reason is to succeed, for the meat-eating habit is often deeply ingrained. However, a few days only of discomfort need be experienced by those who decide that they will eliminate this toxin-producing, nerve-harassing meat excess; and it is remarkable how quickly simple, properly prepared foods will replace the roasts, steaks and cutlets of beef and mutton, if resolution attends on decision. Meat of fowl or fish, properly cooked, is a distinctly wiser diet for the nerves than pork in any form, or excess of beef or even of mutton and veal. All white meats are considered less irritating in their ultimate effect upon the nervous system than the dark or red meats.

**Use and Abuse of Fats.**—The fats and oils produce much more heat and energy, weight for weight, than any other food. They also require more digestive force to prepare them for the body's use. In our country, the chief damage from this type of foods results from unwise mixtures of grease in combinations which retard or interfere with the digestion of other articles of diet. A steak which has been saturated with hot lard or the cotton-seed products now

commonly used in frying will remain in the stomach nearly twice as long as it would if broiled rare. Flour in the form of bread properly baked digests easily. The same flour mixed with lard and eaten as hot biscuit is only digested by a special effort, and after a delay which too often permits fermentation. Many nervous disturbances unquestionably result from the damage to normal digestion caused by these unwise mixtures of grease with foods which would otherwise be easily cared for by the digestive tract. Butter and cream are wholesome, quite digestible and most excellent forms of fat for food use; still, all fats in excess of the needs of the body tend either to accumulate in the form of undesirable adipose, or to interfere with the whole digestive serenity through the excess of fatty acids produced and liberated during disturbed digestion. Again it is the question of adjusting food to the needs of the system as a whole, and nuts and rich gravies and mayonnaise and French dressing and ice-cream and fried cakes, called goodies by the wilful palate, may be taken in excess only under a threat, too often executed, of nervous injury. Cooking ingenuity has been stimulated as the world has shrunk from impassable distances to an affair of neighbourhoods, and as to-day the nations fairly rub elbows, the ideas and tastes and luxuries of all lands are becoming common property, and foods more and more complex, and by the man of the world and his wife elaborate menus are expected. Every step that we depart from simplicity in food is a stride nearer to indigestibility, and all

forms of indigestion leave a harmful residue, to be absorbed and thrown off, if the organs are sufficiently strong, otherwise, to remain and damage.

**Oversoluble Foods.**—Lacking in common sense, the palate has attained a degree of sensitiveness rivalling that of a virtuoso or prima donna, to humour which the miller grinds his cereals finer and finer, the butcher trims his meats and roasts more closely, the cook has multiplied utensils to mince and pulverise and crush and mash, to the end that all that comes to the table may be superlatively smooth and delicate and soft. As a result, much of our food is quite too soluble, too completely dissolved, and quite too fully absorbed, leaving an insufficient residue of insoluble matter. Man's intestinal tract normally requires a relatively large proportion of insoluble material. Many vegetables contain such a substance in the form of cellulose, as for example, the bran of wheat, the hull of sweet corn, the pod of the string-bean, the peel of apples and potatoes; but these are pared or strained or bolted away before the food reaches the modern table. And, as a result, over-absorption takes place, substances enter the system which otherwise would not be taken up, and the residue is often so small as to render sluggishness of the lower intestinal tract habitual. For these reasons it is well for those suffering any degree of autointoxication or sluggishness of the bowels to provide for more insoluble matter in their daily food. One of the simplest and most convenient methods of compensating for this modern food defect is the daily use of

one or two tablespoonfuls of coarse wheat bran, which is improved in flavour by toasting to a moderate brown. This is easily taken when added to the breakfast food, and it is quite a palatable dish served with a sprinkle of salt and moistened with cream. When the need for insoluble food is very marked, it is well to use the bran for breakfast and an extra tablespoonful at bedtime. The habit of starting breakfast with citrus fruits, as orange or grapefruit, is also of great assistance to those who find a sluggish bowel condition the cause of nervous disturbance.

Drugs as Foods.—Even as the tide of controversy has ebbed and flowed on the question of eating or not eating meat, so with more intensity, acrimony, and often with even less logic, the use of tea, coffee, tobacco and alcohol has been argued. These are not true foods, although through the influence of the powerful chemicals which they contain they unquestionably influence digestion and nutrition. But it is not for this limited, often questionable value, that they are used. The stable, poised man and woman have no need and feel none for any of these drugs, which temporarily relieve sensations of depression, disability, irritability—temporarily relieve. Not being real foods, and lacking the inherent value of the foods they replace, they ultimately reduce efficiency. To the unstrung, food-poisoned neurotic they all offer passing, seductive comfort. "They cry 'Peace, peace!' when there is no peace." In moderate amounts the healthy body may care for these drugs

without apparent damage. There are centenarians who ascribe their longevity to tea, to coffee, to tobacco or to alcohol; there are others who claim to have lived their hundred years of health because they used none of these. But the individual case is not a proper example to be used in an argument of the relation of food to health. Few will question the evidence of national and insurance statistics indicating strongly that the many who daily depend upon these food drugs are distanced in life's race in health of body and vigour of offspring by the total abstainers. The more nervous the race, the more dependent we find the individual upon some form of drug ease. The evidence of the nervous damage growing out of unrestrained excess of any of these substances is so incriminating as to render detailed discussion on this point superfluous.

Excess of salt and condiments—in fact, all forms of high seasoning—is generally used to whip up a flagging appetite, to stimulate the palate to accept that which even its ignorance does not crave. Delicacy of taste is thereby rapidly lost, thus developing a vicious circle—the harmful increasing the demand for that which harms. Excessive secretion of mucus is the stomach's protection from such insults, and this retards digestion. Even the remote kidneys are made much more susceptible to harmful changes, Bright's disease being invited through overuse of salt. A normal, hearty appetite is the safest sauce for any meal, and the steak that has to be showered with Worcestershire and the vegetables

which are acceptable only when spiced with Cayenne are a double menace, not only to digestion but to ultimate nervous efficiency.

Efficient Eating.—Until recently physiologists taught the avoidance of water drinking with meals. For many years all teachers have encouraged those suffering from most dietary defects to drink more water, but to shun fluids at meal time as a real danger. It is now known that the gastric juice, which our fathers feared would thus be diluted, is not secreted for at least a half hour after eating, while fluids are absorbed directly by the stomach wall before this time. Insufficient water drinking is a fault of many of the nervous. Water should never be used in the place of mastication to wash down foods which require chewing, but one to three glasses of water with each meal is regarded to-day as an actual aid to digestion. There are few who will not benefit by increasing the total amount of pure water taken daily.

In many lives the stomach is a literal "beast of burden." At any time, without rhyme or reason, it is loaded with a heterogeneous mess. Rebel it does, but unfortunately all too rarely in comparison with the abuses it receives. Modern society makes demands upon digestion only less barbarous than the orgies of the heathen. At morning functions, afternoon functions, evening functions, foods are served which would tax the digestion of a hod-carrier. The richest of salads, spiked punch and afternoon tea, cakes, creams and bonbons, sandwiches fairly oozing

richness, are all smilingly downed, with compliments to "mine host." Many are so weak of will or mind as to be unable to go from one meal to another without pop-corn or peanuts, ice-cream sodas or phosphates, beer and sandwiches, or cake and preserves. To press food or wine upon every guest is still a common standard of hospitality—a pride of entertainment which ignores possible discomfort or damage. Regularity in food insures for the stomach some of that habitual certainty of action, the lack of which in heart control would have long since eliminated the majority of the human race. Not that any normal individual should convert himself into a time-indicator and be a slave to the clock; but reasonable regularity, essential moderateness and simplicity in foods promise health, comfort and nervous efficiency. There is no question but that the healthy man can with practical impunity go on a food spree now and then. At his alumni banquet, on the trip back to the old home farm, at the hunting camp, and on other state occasions, he can digest and assimilate even an excess with comfort—provided he has earned his reserve of force. But many live too close to their margin for this. Many more live chronically toxic, and food excesses but hasten the day of reckoning and retribution. He who earns his bread by the sweat of his brow needs three good, hearty meals. The brain-worker is distinctly better off with two. A simple breakfast, as one of fruit, cereal, eggs, potatoes and toast; a lunch of a whole-wheat bread sandwich and buttermilk, and a four- or five-course dinner

with a small portion of one of the milder meats, will bring him to the end of a year in obviously better condition, more fit for the cares and demands of life, distinctly more clear-brained and nervously comfortable, than is possible upon three heavy meals in imitation of his muscle-worker brother. There are some in whom overeating is a disease which becomes a veritable food-mania, with demands as insatiable and unreasonable as those of the drunkard for his cups, and overeating will probably always be associated with under-thinking, and high living with low efficiency.

Babies are properly fed on a strict milk diet eight times a day at first, then seven, then six. Many "nervous wrecks" should dietetically be taken back to babyhood, put to bed, and given four or five ounces of milk with an ounce or two of Vichy-water eight times a day for several days, and then with milk and cream gradually added, and later raw eggs, be re-educated in their habits of nutrition, and develop again as from babyhood through childhood. As flesh piles on—the evidence that nutrition is being restored—gradually increasing exercise should be taken. And with the return of strength food can be increased, until in addition to milk and eggs, properly cooked vegetables, fruits and their natural juices, and cereals, offer a wholesome, safe bill-of-fare which, with honest daily exercise, will go far toward eliminating all chemical and physical causes for nervous deficiency. There are many so digestively weak as to need regularly a small feeding of

simple food four to six times daily, while more would find their ills rapidly reduced by the omission of one meal and the formation of the two-meal-a-day habit, particularly if the service of meat were eliminated. Many of the autotoxic, therefore, should follow a modified form of fasting, while many of the undernourished need an increased number of meals—practically feasting on the foods of childhood.

The appetite responds to cultivation. He was a brave man who first swallowed a raw oyster, but modern appetites have been educated to consider the succulent bivalve a delicacy; and yet the *bon-vivant* who would imperturbably initiate a dinner with a dozen raw Linnhavens, strains and gags when asked to swallow a raw egg. The real food value of the egg is thrice that of the oyster, while the danger of its undergoing intestinal decomposition is but a small fraction of that existing in the sea-muck-bred delicacy. "Eat three olives and you will always like them." "Don't look at the lobster until after you have taken a bite." So we train our appetites to enjoy the indigestibles—aristocratic indigestibles—with an assiduity unknown in learning to enjoy simple food.

Modern food preparation has taken away much of the work belonging to the teeth. Thorough mastication adds an element to certain foods which means much to their ultimate digestion. Careful mastication develops delicacy of taste and enjoyment of flavours unknown to the gormand bolter. Real use of the teeth is one of the best preventives of decay,

and healthy gums and clean mouths are additional rewards for thorough chewing of foods—foods not too mushy and soft and fine, but foods which give work for the teeth to do. Deliberate eating is one of the best methods of avoiding overeating. Rapid eaters dump the food into their stomachs with such rapidity that damaging excess has been swallowed before the appetite realises it is satisfied. Rapid eaters are usually the overeaters who suffer from retarded digestion because of the mechanical stretching of their stomach walls during early life. Air-swallowers as well as food-gulpers often weaken the essential stomach contractility and thereby suffer from retarded digestion throughout their lives. An excellent plan to avoid the overeating of those foods which are particularly appetising is to request a moderate service only, with a determination that a second service will not be accepted. We are apt to forget how much has gone before, and to pass our plates the second or third time, finally having eaten a total which would have appalled us had it been heaped in one lot before us.

In the final reckoning, the foods which ferment, such as the sugars and starches, many vegetables and fruits, are ultimately less harmful than the meats which putrefy. And so one of the first changes for the toxic sufferer should be the substitution of fermentable foods for the foods of putrefaction. Many are undernourished and nervously half-starved—the thin and anæmic—who have never developed, or through abuse have weakened, their ability to digest

fats. For these a careful course of dietetic training should be considered, beginning with milk and Vichy, then adding cream and after ten days three raw eggs, which can be gradually increased to a dozen, fifteen or even twenty a day, with often a very gratifying increase in weight. The overfleshy are usually over-indulging in sweets or fats and under-exercising. In fact, the whole eating question is so interrelated with that of exercise as to make any dietary rules of limited value when not associated with plans for muscle use. One fundamental truth must be reiterated to the nervous sufferer—he must eat to live and not live to eat. In the very fact that he is nervous exists much more than a hint that the balance between food and exercise is broken, and that in food regulation, in the wise adjustment of what he eats to what he does, he will be able to reduce the whole question of the physical basis of health to utter simplicity.

## CHAPTER IX

### WORK

**Wits and Brawn.**—All mankind not utterly defective has something to do, and the majority find that life holds for them serious effort. Civilisation saw its dawn in the separation of those who work into two groups, the brain-worker and the muscle-worker. The latter has ever been by far the larger class. It has been through dogged, unrelenting tug and pull and strain of muscle that the great bulk of the labour of mankind has been executed. Through the greater portion of the span of centuries, the man of brawn has been under the mastery of the dominating minority, the brain-worker. Slave, serf, vassal, servant—the physically and numerically stronger—have executed the bid and call of their more keen-witted masters. There cannot be the slightest question as to the incomparable advantage of brain over brawn. Under its direction useless, wasteful, dangerous activities have given place to productive, economic and constructive effort, with the result in many lands today, that mankind is quite comfortably caught up with his work. He has passed the stage of a hand-to-mouth existence; he has pulled down his barns and built greater. The man of brain is beginning to share his plenty with the sons and daughters of toil,

whose children are tasting some of the advantages of his children. Wits are multiplying, and as a result of the last century's unprecedented advancement in knowledge and spread of learning, slavery has disappeared, serfdom is doomed, and servants hard to find.

It is indeed unreasonable to question the right of brain to lead and direct, and to reap the fruits of its knowledge. But through the centuries damage in two forms has continually hovered near to threaten or to curse mental superiority. Brain has ever presumed to look down upon and discredit muscle, to hold itself superior, as though cast from a finer material in a different mould; and cruelty and brutality have hardened the superior heart, and jealousy and envy and hate have poisoned the heart of labour; and even to-day the peace between master and him who serves is too often but a truce of convenience. And in addition to these unholy class distinctions, brawn has ever been subject to swift demoralisation through the snobbery of idleness. And what a levelling factor this ever-repeated result of plenty has been! The rich man's son is reared a child of luxury; his offspring becomes a rake and a spendthrift; then comes the reformation, initiated through a generation or so of poverty in response to the eternal edict, "Work or starve." Ever and again, through the skill of cleverness, the necessity for true effort—that productive effort which men call work—has been avoided by one or two generations. Virtuous frugality and honest, successful endeavour have accumu-

lated plenty and spread the downy couch of idleness for their children—wit, success, ability, energy, skill, genius and mastery in this generation breeding underwork and indolence in the next. Soft-palmed men and hothouse women throng life's highway today, caring and planning for little but their own ease and amusement, autocratically endeavouring to usurp and crowd to the by-paths their superiors—the sons and daughters of toil—arrogantly drawing close their unearned skirts of obvious opulence as they pass by, conspicuously inferior, as is every mortal who scorns honest work.

Too long have wealth, station and cleverness dominated and humiliated, or at best, patronised labour. But the toll paid has been excessive, paid in frail, undeveloped bodies, weak of muscle, tense of nerve, with underdeveloped, displaced vital organs, and characters as relaxed. In seeking its parasitic ease, brain has ever overreached itself, and ever has and ever shall suffer and fall a victim of its own misdirected shrewdness. Plenty is prone to early produce physical indolence, the poison-breeder of the body, and idleness, which develops into a practical inertia —idleness, the arch enemy of strength, the incubator of disease, the destroyer of character. Idleness early assumes the form of fatigue—the fatigue which excuses from duty, and shifts responsibility and effort upon others, and which will certainly be followed by a fatigue which is real—the fatigue of flabbiness, the fatigue of inability and weakness. Content may be associated with such worthless living, happiness

never. Happiness pines and dies when separated from effort. Some excellent intellects, active and not lacking in progressiveness, abide in lazy bodies. But mental indolence is probably more common than physical—the indolence which procrastinates, which neglects to plan and arrange, and avoids the efforts attendant upon responsibility; which shirks from decision and the demands of resolution; the mental indolence which plays at work or is content with sham work—such mental indolence as makes possible habits of inaccuracy, slovenly and superficial thinking. And fatigue is offered as the excuse, while inefficient, disorganising worry attends.

Many workers with natural skill and cleverness have not taught themselves methodical habits of thought in their daily work, through months of systematic routine, of earnest, attentive, self-forgetful probation; so skill is discounted and ability cheapened. Partial success or failure mars the usefulness of many who would otherwise have attained an appreciated proficiency, and whose worth and skill and masterful superiority would lift life's work above the thought of tension. But dissatisfaction and the sense of drudgery, the weariness of wasteful energy leakage, the products of disorder and confusion, and sense of incompetence, make work a burden to multitudes. And so mind and body deteriorate under the withering touch of indolence.

The damage of overwork is far less common than that of underwork. Few suffer nervously who do not use overwork as an excuse, and in most cases,

seriously and honestly. The factory drudge may blight and weaken and fail, but the damage is rarely from the physical effort alone. It is usually a combination of defective ventilation and imperfect food —food more frequently lacking in adaptation to the needs of the worker than in quantity—or the result of the erosion of some infection undermining strength; or the disintegrating influence of some burden of anxiety or enmity weighing down the heart. There are unquestionably many who do not truly live; because of man's cruelty to man, of their own neglect of the higher life, the poisoning of the well-springs of the better nature, they merely drag out an existence. To such unfortunates, nervous ill-health may come, but rarely as the result of overwork. A devoted mother, slaving year after year, denied the inspiration of love or the healing touch of kindly sympathy, falls by the wayside, a "victim of overwork." She was more probably starved through lack of wholesome food and absence of pleasure; or faint because deprived of the waters of happiness. Close observation brings conviction that the great majority claiming overwork as the reason for their nervous deficiencies are victims, not of earnest, honest, productive work itself, but of defective methods of work, of work discounted by haste, stress and strain, by impatience, worry and fear. The one who has acquired proficiency and accuracy, who knows no methods but those of earnest endeavour, who has learned to love his work, which he can only do when that work is a consecrated thing—for such a worker

nervous disaster is unknown, save when the very superiority of his splendid attitude surrenders to the damaging intoxications of ill-advised or ignorant eating.

No single factor plays so prominent a part in the blessing or damage of work, physical or mental, as the associated feelings. The emotional life is intimately related to nervous well-being or deficiency. There is no leakage of nervous force comparable to that from unworthy and harmful emotions. Many workers who would otherwise be efficient, successful and able to serve their day and generation happily year after year, are regularly laid up for repairs because of the wasteful emotional intensity associated with their activities. Some of them take themselves and their duties quite too seriously. They carry a useless, wasteful burden of anxiety to each day's labour, and return home bearing an even heavier load. Others destroy all possibility of happiness and content with fear—fear of failure, fear of criticism, fear of being supplanted, fear of illness or loss of ability. Others are ever robbing their strength and resistance through impatience and overanxiety for promotion, and envy of superiors. Calmness, stability, poise, have not been attained, and energy leaks, and strength wastes. Still others are unfitted for what they are doing—square pegs in round holes —and are unwilling to acknowledge their incompetence and to accept simpler positions which they could fill with efficiency, and from which they might gain real development. Enthusiasm, interest and

force and energy are all demanded by life's duties and responsibilities; but enervating intensity and high pressure lead to failure in the mastery of life. And so an early lesson for those possessing the splendid possibilities of the highly organised nervous type is to associate the wholesome emotions with effort, and to daily strive for that underintensity which is manifested through a calm, genial, kindly spirit.

Many discount efficiency and bring upon themselves merited nervous instability because they have never risen superior to the sense of discomfort. Few have attained that attitude which takes away from work and daily duties those weakening influences growing out of the multiplied irritations of small discomforts. Sensitive, weak natures ever surrender to the constantly recurring but insignificant irritations coincident with all effort. Things are perverse; men and women are obstinate; the weather obdurate; the market fickle; the taxes inevitable; noise and activity and turmoil inseparable from progress. Moodiness, misunderstanding, selfishness, even injustice, are human, and will be brought to the surface by the knocks and jolts of life's contacts. But for him who wishes to make every day count for ultimate success, who considers his work, humble though it may be, his divinely directed duty, these are all but incidents, and in rising above them he is discovering one of life's great secrets of success.

Oversensitiveness is an almost universal leakage

defect among nervous workers. All effort is accompanied by either a sense of pleasure or discomfort. It is instinctive for the nervous to avoid the uncomfortable, but most nervous families keep the attention of their members focussed upon that which is unpleasant through constant reference to life's ever-recurring discomforts. Such habits merely increase the capacity for sensitiveness and multiply the objects which harm. In reorganising one's nervous habits few forms of effort are more profitable than those directed toward the overcoming of petty annoyances. To repress the irritability at interruptions was at first difficult, for instance, and yet that very irritability was more of an energy leak and loss to productiveness than was the interruption. Interruptions are inevitable, but a little training will make it possible for the busiest worker to meet the apparently unreasonable with poise and patience.

**Work's Contribution to Mastery.**—From the principles which have been developed in earlier chapters, it seems that, keen as are man's wits, shrewd, penetrating and masterful as he has been in his contentions with Nature, he has not altered one jot the power of her fundamental laws over his own health and well-being. To outgeneral Nature, by avoiding the duty of physical effort, has been the ground upon which man has met defeat generation after generation. The fulness of wisdom has not come to any man until he has realised the futility of trying to dodge his duty to his physical self, and of cheerfully accepting his share of the world's work. In the in-

dividual and in the race, no single factor can contribute so resistlessly to mastery as work. When the nervous sufferer places himself in the hands of the specialist to-day, suffering, as he says, from "overwork," he is quite disconcerted to be shown that it was not his work but his poor methods of work that did the harm; that his prospects of recovery must be based largely upon his ability to learn to work without friction and worry; and that he must find strength through the influence of a simple, wholesome routine of active physical effort, containing logically some of the element of drudgery. Under the influence of patient industry, a wise adjustment of diet, and the stopping of all drugs which soothe and relieve—under this simple, natural, almost primitive routine, strength returns, confidence grows, nerves again become servants and no longer masters, and calm replaces the riot of intensity.

There is an ignorant aristocracy ashamed to work, ashamed to blunt the pointed nails, to harden the palms and with them the muscles, to darken cheek, neck and arms by mixing Nature's iron in the blood; who protect their soft bodies as they would the family jewels, but who are not ashamed to dope, whine and complain, and drug and loaf and laze. Slipping along the paths of least resistance, many of these weaklings can be rescued only by resolute intervention of family or friends, with authority to compel them to profit by the therapy of work. Many hysterics and neurasthenics, the nervous of various types and classes and degrees, are to-day finding

through the education of simple work an adjustment to life's demands, which means for them comfort first, then increasing strength, and later happy productiveness. All except the hopelessly maimed, deformed or seriously diseased, organically, can improve health and profitably add to strength through regular daily exercise.

All who would have their lives enriched may find development of strength, reserve and an augmentation of efficiency, with a definite and satisfying sense of well-being, growing out of earnest, special, daily homage to their muscles. Man's health is closely related to the strength of his vital organs, many of which depend upon the action of involuntary muscles for their perfect function. There is no direct method of adding power to these muscles, but it is significant that deficient voluntary muscles are usually associated with weak involuntary muscles. In consistent, regulated, voluntary effort alone may the involuntary muscles be definitely strengthened. A generation ago weak hearts were protected as the rare tropical plant from the frost of winter. To-day through graduated, intelligent muscular exercise, organically disordered hearts may be invigorated and enabled to approximate the work of the normal heart through many years. Weak hearts can now be so certainly strengthened that even the joys of mountain climbing may be undertaken without damage. Relaxed stomachs and other prolapsed organs may in many cases be slowly but surely restored to a

vigour and tone, which would almost belie their former abnormal condition, through the exercise that builds, the work that strengthens and the effort that constructs. Something is the matter physically or nervously with the average man and woman. Few have not some aches or pains or complaints. The minority speak comfortably of their health; and the man or woman who knows that buoyancy of health and strength which makes effort a joy, which places a premium upon activity—the health which is fairly contagious—is so rare as to be noteworthy. Yet that health is not impossible, through rational living, for the majority of those who to-day complain of their inefficiency.

One of the unfortunate tendencies of the modern medical and nursing care, and one which meets with ready acceptance by the average patient, is that of overprotection and under-exercise. Such care has too commonly become the rule for those who are suffering physical or nervous disorders. For many of them, the price of health, and for most, the price of unusual health or special strength, is found only in unusual effort. Many leading sedentary lives find much weariness in their work, and are quick to state that in the walking they do about the house, at the store or going to and from the office, they have reached the physical limit. These are again common examples of the weariness of under-development, of the tired feeling which is the result of weakness; and few of these weary ones but would respond rapidly

to the uplift and rejuvenation always waiting such underused bodies by aggressive, muscle-building effort.

Most higher type men and women have a high regard for their wills, indeed are proud of their wills. There is but one true witness of the will, one witness whose testimony cannot be discredited—the witness of action. It is not what one determines, what one resolves, but what one produces, that testifies to the will's strength and integrity. From the nervous and often from those who do not belong to this type is heard a constant wail of weariness. "Oh, I don't want to; I am too tired," is the reiterated, deadening reply to the request for extra effort. The majority of the nervous feel close to their fatigue limit at the end of each day's work. But the nervously weak find valuable help in the realisation that all not organically diseased, or upon whose arteries the hardening hand of age has not been laid, may increase their strength-reserve and raise their fatigue-limit manyfold. No part of the body is so quickly responsive to helpful effort as the voluntary muscular system. Within a few weeks the emaciated typhoid patient is often the picture of health, his wasted muscles restored, and his weight as good as, or better than, before his severe illness. If with confidence and determination the undernourished, feeble-muscled victim of quick fatigue will undertake a course of training demanding gradually increasing daily muscular effort, despite the acute weariness and the discouragingly sore muscles of the first few days,

before the weeks have multiplied, a sense of increasing strength will come as a reward of effort. A year of such effort will change weakness into effectiveness; ten years of rational muscular living means robustness; and a generation lived in conscientious daily muscular doing insures a physique of iron and a constitution inured to most human ills.

In attaining mastery through work, one of the blessings which increases hand in hand with honest industry, is the disappearance of introspection, that common enemy to the peace and tranquillity of a sensitive nature. Devotion to duty leads the mind away from itself and its tenement. Through work the power of externalisation grows, and in this, man finds one of the most certain forms of mental and spiritual mastery.

It is a profound misfortune for any young person to enter the serious years of life without having been earnestly impressed with the dignity of work, or taught to feel that ever within reach are divinely-appointed duties. Only in seeking and finding and doing the daily task, will we pay the price for health, the price so frequently resented or denied. Here will we find as well the nucleus of contentment, the heart of truth and the laugh of happiness. Let not the artistic, the exalted, the brilliant and the aristocratic forget the call of drudgery. A touch of it regularly for us all is the touch that keeps our hearts and minds akin to the great working mass of mankind and womankind. In our bit of drudgery, or in our life of drudgery, let us not make the fatal

mistake of discrediting what we do, but develop the delight in doing and persistently dodge the lazing. So with pride and the spirit of competition, even though self be the sole opponent, the most menial tasks may be exalted.

## CHAPTER X

### PLAY

**The Fine Art of Play.**—Work may be defined as consistent, productive action, and play as pleasurable action. Mother Nature plays with us patiently and beautifully as children. Unless we have been spoiled by our purse-proud or frightened elders, we early learn the beauties inherent in sticks and mud and stones, and pieces of broken china, and chicken feathers and unbathable rag dolls, and romping and running and tumbling, and disobeying and switchings, and lusty howling and shouts of glee, because we are living in the play-day of life, and our tears serve but to make the rainbows; for nothing serious or tragic or impending exists. But all this fulness of health and lustiness and normality and joy are apt to slip away as the realities of life crowd in. The unfortunate early abandons all play; the dignity of maturity, the dictates of our neighbour's set, the inertia of indolence, the love of ease, gradually descend upon us. Most wholesome physical activity which can be called play is lost to the average young person by twenty-one; but we play cards or perchance checkers, or, if a bit mentally ambitious, chess; and we dance ourselves dizzy in overheated rooms, oft playing with fire; or twist up our nervous tension several notches

and rush ourselves through the country with our precious necks depending upon the life of a rubber tire.

Society at play has had little that is wholesome beyond these limited activities, until quite recent years. To-day in our private schools and colleges, and even in some public schools and through municipal playgrounds, consistent effort is being made to teach our young people the art of play. But too many men and women have never learned this art since it slipped with the ebbing of childhood; and with the need of play not second to that of work, are unable to enter into this God-given ability with any semblance of success. Awkward, self-conscious, uninterested, the average grown-up to-day makes work of his play. He finds in the weather, and his cold, and the extra hour's work at the office, in unnecessary and unimportant engagements, ample opportunity and excuse for avoiding his hours in the open. He was not made for indoor life. Pneumonia and tuberculosis and dyspepsia and nervousness combine to send him afoot and afield. Most emphatically do they urge him to "up and out and go." But there is so little for him to do when he leaves his work-bench or his library. To be nervously efficient, to be nervously self-mastered and dependable, one must learn to make play of play. While ten thousand forms of effort have been called work, it is significant how few of man's activities he calls play.

But there is always the out-of-doors, and even a

walk through the monotonous city street is better than the sluggish sleepy-hollow chair. Walking, to be worth while as a sport, should take us afield, and if it is the only exercise depended upon for extra health and endurance, it must be pushed in activity and distance to be effective. At least six miles in an hour and a half for the normal man, and four miles in eighty minutes for the average woman, is a mild minimum. Our ruddy-cheeked English cousins consider double this amount a fair daily average. Tramping is splendid. Roughly clad, independent of rain and snow, with a light pack, a tramping tour lasting five or six days and covering a hundred miles, sleeping in the open if at all practical, is a contribution to health, strength and robustness not found in a month's motoring. Hill-climbing is one of the very best forms of condensed exercise. It develops the heavy thigh and calf muscles, tissues which become literal secreters of vitality. And while it may be monotonous, and certainly does look a bit foolish to hike up and down the same path repeatedly, a thousand feet of hill-climbing a day, kept up month after month, will add famously to strength, breathing capacity and total vitality.

Water sports, including swimming, rowing, canoeing and yachting, with motor-boating a badly distanced substitute, are unfortunately not commonly available. Swimming and canoeing are particularly productive of stamina. Few experiences so promptly strip off the veneer of oversensitiveness as camp life—not the silk-stocking kind, with a motor-

car at your elbow and generous hampers of rich delicacies, and inexhaustible flasks of icy-hot, with tents and air-mattresses and all the comforts of home; but a genuine spell of roughing it, doing your own cooking, dish-washing and laundering, rolling up in your blanket with a few fresh boughs for a bed, and learning to sleep with the heavens as your canopy and the slowly-trooping stars as your watchers. How quickly the slavery of comfort can thus be eliminated. The scratches and temporary absences of skin become insignificant, and we forget to jump and exclaim at contact with the harmless things that creep and crawl. How soon we find ourselves akin to Nature, who would love us into worthy manhood and womanhood, who ever calls us to snuggle close to her ample bosom and renew our strength, as did the giant of old! How promptly our good Mother Nature fulfils her promises and shares with us her own imperturbable serenity, if we but answer her call! But the flowers, the grasses, the trees and the birds, the beauty of hill and vale, the thrill of mountain-side, the wild, picturesque song of its dashing stream, are insufficient to satisfy the needs of many who would seek the open for restoration. So hunting and fishing give an added interest of chase and contest to the call of the open, and have proven restorative forces for many who have felt the frazzle of misuse.

Our out-of-door games are limited. Golf is helping much. A set of aggressive tennis each week day will furnish all the special needs of the average

man or woman. Tennis requires skill and many months of practice before a satisfactory game can be played. Baseball is one of the most perfect games from the spectators' standpoint, but as it requires a large field and but few players, the number who can derive direct benefit from this excellent exercise is limited. Basket-ball in the open is practicable but a few months of the year. It is a strenuous, active, helpful game for those who are physically fit. This short list practically comprises the wholesome forms of out-of-door play available to-day, and where one can profit by some of these, ten cannot. When it comes to suggesting play for the average man and woman whose physical strength and nervous comfort are hanging in the balance, the inadequacy of our generation's play-life for grown-ups is made pitiably evident. But the insistence upon daily exercise has been reiterated with an emphasis which cannot be denied, if the principles upon which the arguments are based are accepted.

To plan home exercise is very simple. To plan home exercise which can be considered as play is extremely difficult. For all who would maintain health, the day should begin with three or four minutes of active breathing exercises, the soldier's position of attention being assumed, with chin and shoulders drawn back, and the lungs repeatedly filled to capacity with the freshest and purest air obtainable. If this becomes a life's habit, the greatest possible benefit to lungs and circulation will result. A harmless feeling of dizziness from oxygen intoxication is

quite common when this exercise is first being attempted. Raising the body repeatedly to full height on the toes until the calves feel the stab of acute tire, and following this with the spread-eagle—that excellent intensive exercise of the army setting-up drill—pushed to comparative breathlessness, with active and thorough bending of the trunk, will provide in ten minutes of vigorous work a daily home exercise which in the course of years will prove an irrefutable contribution to health. He who is truly in earnest and has no hill to climb will find in the stairs a prosaic but efficient substitute. For the reasonably strong, a few trips up daily, two steps at a time, and later possibly three steps at a jump, so increased as to insure thorough deep breathing and a sense of acute tire, is an energetic and developing method of exercise open to all not organically diseased. When a companion is available, fifteen minutes' use of a four- or six-pound medicine-ball is probably the most simply useful of all home exercises. Best taken out-of-doors, if possible, otherwise in a well-ventilated room, this exercise is very useful for the development of the important chest and back muscles, when the ball is actively thrown. When four or five can exercise together, a simple real sport, with rapid education of muscle and delicacy of movement, is possible in the passing of a medicine-ball, basket-ball, baseball and tennis-ball in rapid succession. Not a little skill is required in keeping these spheres of various sizes and weights in rapid rotation, and much sport is possible. Many

other useful forms of ten or fifteen minute home exercises have been devised. Also many fake systems of physical culture are available for those who would part with their dollars. But it is not the high-priced system, not the elaborate appliances, but the faithful following of a simple routine, systematically and persistently, which brings the desired health and the strength and vitality which are the basis of physical vivacity, productiveness and resistance. Exercises specially planned for health are so lacking in the play element that many of the above suggestions are given with full recognition of the large amount of moral courage necessary to successfully carry them out.

The gymnasium always offers the incentive of class work under the skilled director. Two or three years of earnest gymnasium training is a splendid addition to the education of boys and girls of twelve to fifteen. Boxing and wrestling are more violent exercises, which develop strength rapidly, and are capable of producing a large return in benefit for those sufficiently strong to make use of them. There is a form of hand-wrestling which can be carried out by any two of reasonably balanced strength, capable of beneficially utilising all the muscles of the body, and developing agility and poise as well as strength.

For all who are seeking nervous restoration through the efficiency of diet and exercise, the question comes as to how much exercise should be taken. The average nervous sufferer will begin his restitution in poor physical condition. If at all possible,

several weeks should be devoted to a camping or tramping trip, or to some course of systematic physical culture, or several hours a day spent in gradually increasing miles of walking, with any form of work with the hands which will strengthen the muscles. Wood-chopping, gardening, spading, transplanting, work on the farm, or other physical work, can be gradually and steadily increased until the fatigue limit has been pushed far beyond that of the past. After one has truly conditioned himself through such means, one-half hour of the more active indoor exercises in addition to energetic daily walking pushed to the point of perspiration, will usually suffice to maintain a high degree of health and strength through many years.

The fine art of play does not require the competition of contest, the rivalry of athletic conflict or the stimulus of applause, but is an art which lends itself to all action. We have seen that both work and play are forms of activity. The world has for many generations spoken of its work with more or less anguish and resentment, and is ever looking away from work to the days of play. But the world does not know the fine art of play. We have not realised that the great difference between work and play is but a difference of attitude. Those actions which we choose, and in which there is no compulsion save the desires of our own sweet wills, and which are performed purely from the love of the action therein, are called play. The same action instantly becomes work when done under coercion.

The most enthusiastic football half-back would soon loathe his plunging line-bucking were he opposed by wooden dummies, were he compelled to bruise and strain to overcome mere mechanical resistance, were his sport robbed of the keen spirit of competition and the thrill of the personal encounter. The fine art of play recognises in all activity the opportunity for pleasure. The weakling makes work of his play, and is joyless in the very pursuit of his sport. The great mass of the world's workers think of work as work. A small company of grown-ups have retained their ability to play, and to look on play as play. He has adjusted self to life, he has applied a wholesome philosophy to his earthly span of existence, who enters into all the activities of so-called work with the fine spirit of play; who, finding joy in the doing, puts the enthusiasm and the spirit into his work that makes him an inspiration to all who feel his mastery of the great secret which life gives us all to solve. For him idealism finds expression in what his hands and his mind find to do.

He is above all the true sportsman who recognises within himself a power which transmutes the weariness of drudgery. To him consistent and productive activities of mind and body are part of that great game of life in which Destiny deals the cards and man names the trump. The master-man *is* a true sportsman, and is as sensitive to the moral element of his play-work or his work-play as to any duty to his neighbour or his God; and in work and play, in the game of life or in his game of golf, he

keeps spite and selfishness out of the competition, and puts pride and honour in. To him who will earnestly study the rules of life's game and play it fair—fair to himself and fair to those who need his strength—the mastery will come when work is no longer drudgery but has taken on the spirit of play; and when the ideals of sincerity, honour and integrity, inherent in sportsmanship, come, he then is able to play the game as a victor, and none of the enemies of life's happiness or of joy will overtake him in the race for the goal, in the race for the great goal of self-mastery, for the attainment of which the game of life is played.

## CHAPTER XI

### TANGLED THOUGHTS

**The Mind's Omnipotence.**—From the foregoing discussion of the physical causes producing nervousness it appears that the physical habits of the majority to-day invite nervous disorder. It is true that examination of many of the nervous seeking professional counsel reveals bodily disturbances, chiefly disorders which spring from errors in eating or neglect of exercise. We have learned moreover, that practically all the nervous are distinctly benefited by a wise attention to nutritional harmony. But nervousness can exist in the apparently sound body, the body in which the skilled examiner fails to find organic or chemical defect. Indeed, most victims of nerves require a mental readjustment, as earnest and far-reaching as the physical. In fact, the commmonest of the mental causes of nervousness are so obvious that certain schools of healers ignore the physical basis entirely, and depend only upon the mental readjustment to effect cure. Such form of treatment is scientifically termed psychotherapy, meaning simply mental healing. Through the centuries numberless cures have been effected through mental influence, which has also afforded more or less permanent relief from distressing symptoms to many

more. When we recall our conception of nervousness, as the undue response of the sensitive nervous mechanism to stimuli, such a possibility becomes at once obvious; for, while we must whisper it gently so as not to offend these same sensitive ones, nervousness is, in truth, a mental disorder. The condition of the body normally contributes strongly to our mental poise, but the brain may become so sluggish under the influence of a powerful drug that the mind will fail to note even the most intense physical pain. On the other hand, under the whip and spur of its own poisons, the brain may become a true sensitive-plant, and mental responsiveness to all forms of stimuli be increased many times. It becomes clear, therefore, that the mental basis of nervousness is a consciousness ill at ease, if not acutely suffering.

And what a superb instrument is man's mind! We have already noted its almost limitless capacity for adjustment and adaptation. The accumulated writings of the sensualists, philosophic, ethic and esthetic, have failed to tell the whole story of the possibilities and varieties inherent in human sensation. From one point of view, the entire surface of the body is an elaborate mechanism for acquainting the mind with a great world of things, and for bringing it, year after year, into closer touch with our universe. Words have never yet adequately described the fulness of seeing and feeling and hearing.

Philosophy has it that our morning paper and far

Polaris, the south wind against my brow, the cricket's friendly chirp, the anguish of pain and the mother's lullaby, exist only in individual perceptions; and when we consider how quickly the few drops of potent drug instilled into our veins extinguish these and all other conscious relations, we feel the force of the philosopher's insistence. But while we accept this conception for the moment, we go on thinking and feeling and doing and living as though what we saw and touched existed outside of our minds; as when, through the mental faculty termed apperception, we recognise the blotch of moving colour on the hillside as our child, the floating brown speck on the distant water as our neighbour's motor-boat, or the dim hum in the distance as the auto of a distinct make, our mind grasps these symbols as unquestioned reality, and we know what we have seen and heard to be so. How acutely, shrewdly, how ingeniously does the mind travel to the full limit of the senses and return with satisfied knowledge!

With closed eyes and all the curtains of the senses drawn, how truly may Memory select one from the million threads which Experience has spun, and follow it unerringly through its variegated course in the intricate pattern of the past. And how truly does she reveal, and how clearly does she again disclose each sober tone of trouble or each golden glint of gladness! How carefully she keeps each strand in place! At any hour the prosaic or poetic pattern may be reproduced, as she flashes the light of the

present over the fabric of the past, that the worker may mistake not where he is in his weaving.

Ideation gives the future to man with its beauties, its warnings, its friends and its duties. In the mind of childhood it converts the simple and the commonplace, for the time, into all that heart can desire; the imagination of youth builds its castles towering to the sky—castles which will never know the reality of stone and mortar, but castles in which great hopes, great desires, and now and again, great resolutions, are born. Imagination throws the halo of beauty over each mother's girl-child, and drapes the mantle of greatness over the helpless shoulders of her man-child. Ideation fills our libraries, paints our canvases and delves into the very mind of Nature, transmuting her powers into the clicking looms and the tireless wheels of industry.

Upon the throne of this mind sits Judgment—deliberate, calm, masterful, regal—the mind's ruler, whom Memory serves with the faithfulness and readiness of Mercury of old, before whom Ideation lays all his plans and dreams, in whose presence Emotion's children of mirth and joy may sing and dance and revel, while her daughters of mourning wipe away the tears that blind and ask for the duty which leads to content. Even imperious Will bows in homage to reason and pledges the allegiance of his forces—those forces which do the mind's great work, and are ever ready to protect it from enemies which would destroy. The decisions of reason are called

judgments, and, as the decisions of the good king, should be the law of the land.

We have indulged in a fanciful review of the elements into which the psychologist divides the mind, that our memory might be refreshed and our more prosaic and serious consideration of those disorders which discount the mind's serenity and cause it to suffer, might be clear. As we have seen, the mind's various qualities put us in touch with not only the happenings of the present moment, but with the vast store-houses of the past and the unlimited, presumptuous future; of all this each man is a king indeed in his unlimited freedom in selecting that upon which his mind will dwell. In the mind in which reason has developed and has assumed its intended mastery, overruling the demands and impulses of emotion, and in which will is responsive and responsible, the ability to select, to elect those objects to which it will give attention, is practically absolute. In the selection of its objects of attention, the normal mind is omnipotent. The construction of such a mind is not unlike that of a vast telephone exchange, with switchboards, into which run myriad wires, any one of which the mind of the operator can select, and, oblivious to the insistence of all other lines, hold communion with the individual of his choice. At any moment, switching upon another line, he can be instantly in touch with a new and remote interest. Within a hand's touch of a babel of voices, he selects and attends to one and spurns all

others. And so the normal mind, through attention, concentrates its forces along one line of interest, oblivious to the clamouring, calling, crowding, insisting world of other interests. And so we can be a thousand I's as we turn attention from one thrilling and compelling interest to another and again another, for the normal mind can select well its world. The fearsome law of the mind is, that consciously or unconsciously, joyously or miserably, it lives its own choice, it follows the path of its own selection.

Education in its various aspects is intended to place before the mind in proper order and truthful form a gradually increasing number of objects from which the mind may choose and multiply its ideas, the while it is supposed to be increasing the keenness and the accuracy of the critical sense, that specialised function which makes possible a high quality of selection. Advanced development of this critical sense presupposes the possession of a large variety of facts from which comparisons are possible, and a breadth of judgment which withholds decision until all available facts have been considered. Education is no insurance, however, of perfection, or even of a high degree of selective skill. Common sense, Nature's gift, intuitively chooses from the mass of the mind's possibilities the helpful thought, the practical and the appropriate thought, and attends thereto.

**Tangled Thoughts.**—Few minds are naturally or through cultivation so poised and adjusted as to adapt themselves faultlessly to the business in hand.

Even as the physical habits of indolence are acquired in childhood, so damaging mental habits are early formed. In the midst of the infinite variety of the world's beauties and needs and interests, many permit attention to lie dormant. As the child of laziness remains abed till a late hour of the day, so, many minds fail to leave their couch of narrow interests, and neglect year after year earnest thought or serious mental endeavour. A very common defect with certain types of the nervous is this one of limited interests, and limited interests are usually self-interests. Others through lack of mental effort or from overcrowding in their school work, or as a result of imperfect teaching, develop haziness of thought, with a resulting uncertainty which is in itself a weakness, and a basis for much of the indecision so common to the nervous. Mental habits form early, and before twenty the average mind has worn its pathways of thought—pathways which are ever afterward ways of least resistance. These thought habits formed unconsciously in childhood and youth are replaced in adult life only by painstaking and consistent conscious effort.

Most nervous suffering growing out of defective thinking is the result of error. Ignorance is common, and false ideas, errors in interpretation, and false judgments, afford constant opportunity to select objects of thought and attention which are unwholesome and harmful. Until reason has been trained to control the activities of the mind, feelings assert the mastery, and wants and desires fly

into the foreground, insistent and demanding. The mastery of reason and the control of the will must protect us from the errors which grow out of thoughtless, impulsive action. Childhood is a period largely ruled by emotions. Youth's temperament has strong desire, and reason seems for the time hopeless, while emotion holds the ascendency. Many of the nervous have failed to develop beyond this stage, having never systematically and resolutely harkened to the voice of Reason. They have not willed, and willed again, that impulse be set aside, and that counsel and reason be followed. Many at thirty or forty—yes, at fifty or sixty—still maintain the emotional minds of youth, and continue to suffer through false judgment. Many physically mature and scholastically well-trained men and women confuse feeling and reason. They believe that they are deliberately contemplating a situation from all points of view, when they are merely brooding; and far from earnest, forceful, logical thinking, they are but emotionally dreaming of greater ills or brighter pleasures. Deceiving themselves into the belief that they are reasoning the question out, they but drift from one feeling to another, and the conclusions they reach are little better than the choice of chance.

Many seek nervous help in the belief that through some unusual physical effort in the past—a hard year in the store, or the care of an invalid parent—or that from the remnants of some accident of long ago, a permanent physical hurt has resulted, and ascribe to such supposed injuries an impossible list

of aches and pains. The real damage has been far more often one of hurtful mental selection, or worry and anxieties, of apprehension, of the reiteration of harmful memories—memories which obscure the firmament of hope and happiness with their grey pall of depression. How many minds hang with fateful tenacity upon a loss—the mother for her child, the husband for the sainted wife! How frequently the recurring consciousness of a sin, or of injustice suffered, drapes the stage of life's action with the blackness of mourning, shutting out the voices of happiness, blinding the eye to the beckoning of hope, and fairly smothering the heart's impulses for good. Such memories are but premature winding sheets, imprisoning the nature which should still find loves and friendships and inspiration in this big, teeming, needy world.

Superficial knowledge, accepted as final, definite and positive, is a soil in which many weeds of nervousness grow luxuriantly. In our study of dietary errors we have seen how little the average man knows of the relatively simple processes of digestion, and he knows even less of the more intricate action of organs more vital. But the superficial thinker is satisfied with quarter- or half-knowledge. So when, after an unwonted bit of exercise, he notes the active pulsations of his heart and finds that organ dutifully registering a hundred and twenty or thirty beats a minute, he is seized with a panic—he has "palpitation of the heart." From that day, seriously or fearsomely, he avoids undue exercise,

and probably falls into the pulse-feeling habit, which may grow until the action of his heart divides his attention with all the possibilities of world-wide interests, a poor victim of superficial knowledge. Yet he represents a common class of the nervous. Men and women of this type discount their usefulness many per cent. through periods of years, simply because they do not know that every normal heart should beat a hundred and twenty or thirty times a minute following an unusual furlong's run for the train, or any other active and unaccustomed exercise. Thousands refuse to know the mountain's beatitudes at first hand, because of the nervous sensation of air-hunger common to many who are anxious and depressed, believing that the moderately rare air of the mountain elevation is pregnant with impending disaster.

Superficial knowledge and a persistence of emotional supremacy over reason is a basis for suggestibility—a nervous defect fundamental in that large class of the nervous, styled "hysterics." In suggestibility the mind is influenced by feeling, even in the face of the protests of reason, but too frequently reason is not there to protest. Many lives are practically crazy patch-works, knowing neither persistence nor stability, truly children of occasion, impelled by suggestions introduced by emotions, often not even challenged by reason. Suggestibility is an essential asset of the child mind. It leads the young mind before knowledge comes and reason is evolved. Abnormally it is often seen in the oversuggestible

mind, persisting in the adult life, an evidence of unsymmetrical mental development. Reason did not come to its own, and the avenue through which childhood's mind was influenced remains an insufficient channel for the grown-up mind.

Most suggestions come from influences appealing to the imagination. The graphic and thrilling patent medicine advertisements are written for the suggestible mind. These detailed and vivid accounts of symptoms, often not really indicative of disease, but labelled with some fearsome name and followed by accounts of marvellous cures, have for many years drawn streams of dollars from the pockets of penury—streams fairly overflowing the coffers of wealth. In return useless, sometimes even harmful, compounds have been given, sufficiently potent, however, to produce imaginary cures of imaginary diseases. Much nervous invalidism is the result of self-suggestion. In the suggestible the idea of frailty, of defect of sight, inadequacy of digestion, of inability to sleep—these and a hundred other deficiencies or disabilities the mind may suggest to itself, and a resulting partial or complete invalidism may continue for years until a stronger suggestion, some more powerful ideational influence, replaces the defective, weakening one; and perchance the miracle of restoration is performed!

**Error and Illness.**—Through suggestibility every known organic disease may be imitated, simulated through expectation, self-centredness and self-study; every known set of symptoms may appear,

reproducing organic disturbances so accurately as to deceive the elect. Were it not for the neurologist's habit of keen investigation of his patient's mentality and ready detection of suggestibility, with his knowledge that in a mind so constituted the symptoms of organic disease can be reproduced through the interrelation of mind and body, many of these sufferers would remain beyond the helpful influence of medical skill. From this large class of the suggestible many are rescued from tuberculosis, from cancer, from various forms of paralysis and languishing beds of many years' illness, from the diseases which all the doctors in the neighbourhood failed to cure or understand!—none of which existed outside the patient's mind and that of the sympathetic family and credible friends. Thus thousands are annually cured by this or that patent medicine, religious influence, or special forms of joint-stretching or nerve-rubbing manipulations.

Unfortunately, the over-solicitous physician and nurse, not recognising the suggestibility of their patient and the undue influence which their warnings are going to exercise, may, in their desire to afford a protective helpfulness, do unintentional but lasting damage to the patient's self-confidence, and thereby augment his tendency to nervous invalidism. Many a patient has proceeded to suffer all the symptoms of inflammation of the stomach following the physician's apprehensive, "I fear you are threatened with gastritis." The writer has met numerous cases in which the patient two, three, even six and seven

years after surgical operations, was still avoiding strengthening, developing and health-giving exercise because of the fateful warning of the physician or nurse to avoid any strain. They neglected to neutralise this temporarily helpful injunction by careful and explicit directions as to when, and how, to resume the exercise which would strengthen, and make perfect the cure for which the operation was done. There are, unfortunately, poorly prepared physicians and ignorant nurses whose lack of knowledge makes them a serious menace to the suggestible patient, who, accepting their word as authority, may suffer long and uselessly, because of the incapacitating idea of disease, which has been a professional contribution to their minds.

The sum of human knowledge is such that no mind can span its entirety. It is only since Science has come to her own, that even the best trained have had knowledge, at all adequate, of the nature of bodily and mental ills. The complexities of medical science are such that to-day no physician pretends to keep fully abreast with all its various branches. It is obviously impossible, therefore, for the lay or untrained mind to know the body, its needs, the mind and its intricate relations; to understand the processes of disease and the complicated effects it produces on mind and body.

Our study of the influence of error upon nervous health has thus far considered it a result of ignorance or a defect of development. Few minds are perfectly poised. Many overemphasise, overstress,

overfeel, overwill; more, probably, fail to duly emphasise, and live years of depression and undervaluation. There is a group of the nervously ill who, consciously or unconsciously, find in their nervousness a defence. They are thereby relieved of home responsibilities; the burdens of family support are readjusted so as to fall more lightly on their shoulders. The nervous child often finds herself excused from school and home duties. Many a career is cut short, education lost and future blighted because of nervousness. Nervousness may result as a protective defence, with selfish grief, shallow disappointment or the cowardly fear idea as a basis. Now and again there are those, not unconscious of their surrender, who are willing to live vampire-like upon the very strength and blood of loving sacrifice. So in the mental manifestations of this protein disorder, defence reactions may end in surrenders, not only of duty, but of character.

Our thoughts concerning our bodies sometimes become morbidly domineering and demanding, and so controlling that we frequently surrender to their persistent repetition, even when we more or less clearly realise the damage which will follow. The insistent idea of bodily disablity or disturbance then so largely occupies the filed of consciousness as to limit the mind's activities in other directions. Hypochondriasis is the name given this form of tangled thoughts, and when allowed to progress unresisted and uncombated it may finally make hopeless wreckage of life.

When judgment fails to definitely and clearly assert its demands for truth, the imaginative thought life, an outgrowth of the normal ideation of the child, may persist as an unwholesome habit into adult life, and the vividness of what is truly fantastic blur reality. There is no known limit that can curtail the intensity and immensity of our imaginings; but in a mind of activity, the less the accurate knowledge, the less truth, the fewer acquired facts—the less one really knows, the more he will imagine. And so, many minds, which, properly trained, might have developed a high degree of productive capacity, through lack of training and proper discipline, and failure to hold hard by truth, have developed morbid imaginings. Day-dreams and longings for that which is not probable, perchance not possible, usually not deserved and never honestly earned, separate further and further the real from the so-called ideal, and out of the fantastic life the wish-habit grows. The day-dream is the conscious expression of the elaborate, usually impossible, and not infrequently unwise wish. Analysis of many of our night-dreams will show that they are distorted, disguised expressions of our wish-life—ofttimes wishes buried from consciousness and rising from the primitive instincts—dreams created by unthought cravings. There is a certain type whose idealism is closely allied to sentimentalism, who turn from life's realities as being too crude, too far from the truth as they would have it, and bury themselves in the unreal, and ultimately unprofitable, fantastic.

Gradually imagination more and more supplants reality, the ability to recognise truth becomes weakened and defective; and herein is developed a basis of much unconscious simulation and deceit.

Much serious hysteria follow accidents, especially accidents in which responsibility can be laid upon some wealthy corporation, hysteria manifesting itself in continued pain or paralysis, or even in forms of blindness or mutism or joint contractures, but the resultant deformities may be cured as by magic by the settlement of the damage suit. The influence of the wish in lives so divorced from reason or control is powerful. In some the surrender in the life discounted by day-dreaming may grow out of the mind's inability to accept the truism that reality never fulfils the ideal. Man can ever plan more than body, mind or even life can realise. To the thoughtful there exists herein a suggestion that there are possibilities of realisation unknown in our present sphere of existence. In the errors into which the mind falls, so damaging in their effects upon progress and development, errors which allow multitudes to grope along into old age, never having known mental mastery—we recognise that the fault has been in our selection of the thoughts and feelings which we permitted to occupy the centre of our stage of consciousness. In our choice of actors in our drama of life we have too often turned over the serious business to mere amateurs, or allowed the villain to play the hero's part, or the comedian to cheapen that which should have been sacred.

Again, in the development of mind it becomes necessary during the early years for the child to be the object of much attention. In being directed physically and mentally, in discipline, in the teaching of courtesy, at school and in the home, the child receives much individual attention. As intelligence wakens, knowledge broadens and interests multiply, the normal mind finds outside of self that which attracts, diverts, distracts and fascinates. Habits form rapidly in youth, habits which relieve the mind of much of effort by developing the automatic, and thereby making it easy for the mind to externalise its interests, while it depends on the subconscious, the automatic, to care for many of the body needs, and for much of the further development of the mind. And in life's duties and legitimate pleasures, in the great interrelations of society, in the call to responsibility and in the satisfying of effort, the mature mind is busy from morning to night, and self-forgetfulness becomes a wholesome, saving habit of life. But through overattention in childhood, through repeated and unwise references in the child's presence to his attractiveness and naïve brightness and precocious originality, conceit grows, an excess of individualism develops, and self-centredness may persist to contract, and later to deform, or even to distort character. Self-attention is largely unprofitable attention. The habit of introspection may produce the "shut-in" nature which, when surrendered to, may be the basis of mental disturbances. To the mind centred on self, adjustments to surroundings must be

inadequate, oversolicitude concerning our condition, well-being, present and future, becomes distorted and inexact, and self-observation becomes a disease.

Many of the pains of the nervous are scientifically termed "attention-pains." If we concentrate the mind, especially with any degree of apprehension, upon a part of the body, that part becomes rapidly more sensitive. All active persons at some time wrench the back muscles at the waist-line. This simple accident may develop into an incapacitating weakness when the mind anxiously dwells upon these sore muscles, frequently with intensified apprehension through foolish association of this simple hurt with kidney damage. The normal individual would laughingly grunt for a few days about his condition, whereas in the neurotic, a permanent weakness may supervene, and years later the patient be slouching in an easy chair, protecting himself from the attention-pains born of a physically harmless injury. Pains galore and depressions unspeakable are the constant outgrowth of the damage of self-attention. So again we have been considering examples of hurt growing out of unwise selection, of unwise thought choice.

With the exception of self-attention necessary for the formation of wholesome habits in childhood, a small amount of self-thought, of self-study and self-analysis, with an infinitesimal amount of self-commiseration, should be the law of all who would avoid the insidious development of nervous hurt, the certain penalty of habitual self-centredness. Power

of physique, strength of constitution, perfect digestion and unquestioned circulation—in fact, robust health—are ineffective when ruled by a mind led by morbid questionings based upon false ideas, accepting the testimony of fearsome emotions, and sensitively and irrationally suggestible. A mind looking for excuses to avoid life's duties; a mentality that watches the body's every movement, that studies its heart-throbs, and takes undue account of those pains and temporary disabilities inherent in all normal living, will create nervousness in even the physically perfect. No physique, regardless of its innate strength, can resist the insidious, damaging influence of the disease-accepting mind. The healthy body is ultimately helpless when a victim of tangled thought-control.

## CHAPTER XII

### EMOTIONAL TYRANNY

**Nature of the Emotions.**—In the mind's efforts at adjustment three channels are open. In the properly developed mind, intelligence, with its accurate array of facts, its careful selection and definite decision, makes the most perfect mental adjustments possible. The universally respected judicial mind is of this type; true leaders in progress and constructive organisers are thus mentally constituted. But while one leads, many follow. The average person unconsciously depends upon imitation, the second possibility of adjustment; and thus the majority do as their elders did, and, following the paths already worn across life's meads and fens, seldom risk losing their way by venturesome excursions. Imitation solves the cut of most coats, lengthens and shortens skirts, attires serving maids, popularises the year's novels, chooses the new auto, and even selects subjects for and decides the style of many ministers' sermons. Cultivated reason presupposes long training, and intelligent imitation is only possible when observation has been cultivated, and some critical sense developed. Undeveloped, untrained uneducated man through all time has required his channel of adjustment, also. Primitive and simple

leadings his may be, perchance, but whether protective or aggressive or meagrely productive, the instinctive ever-present emotional life has ever been mankind's inherent directing force.

Simply stated, our emotions embrace all experiences which we include under the terms pleasant and unpleasant. It is easy to see the instinctive influence of pleasure in attracting us toward that which is pleasure-producing, and the equally primitive nature of the repelling influence of the unpleasant. Each mental act is associated with some emotional reaction, and the restless ebb and flow of the ocean's tide is sluggishness indeed, when compared with the constant attraction and repulsion accompanying every conscious thought. Emotional life knows no neutral states. Our feelings have no dead centre. The animal kingdom is dominated by emotions. The stranger approaches, curiosity impels the dog to run forward to investigate; there is a threatening gesture, in anger an attack is made, and following the well-directed blow, the yelping retreat of fear. Curiosity, anger, fear—how large a span of human activities has its origin in these three primal channels of emotional adjustment! The emotions are our inherited counsellors. They appear early, and are the sole guide to action until superseded by slowly acquired intellect. In the nervous, emotional intensity is overemphasised; in the true neurotic an excessive tendency to emotional response is a fundamental weakness, which can only be displaced by serious and tedious years of rational training, which

many of the presumably educated have failed to undertake. To-day the anomaly of high intellectual attainments with defective emotional mastery is commonly observed.

In everyday language we speak of the emotions as the "feelings," and both words suggest possible sensation. In our experience, all pleasurable thoughts do produce a sense of physical comfort and well-being or relief, while the unpleasant are associated with painful feelings, discomfort or weariness. There is a reason for these associated sensations. The "sympathetic," an important division of the nervous system which cannot be directly influenced through the conscious mind, has control of all the muscular movements upon which many of the activities of the vital organs depend. Here mind and body clasp hands. The fear thought, through the sympathetic nerves which control the heart's activites, causes that organ, even in the face of determination to the contrary, to double the force and number of its beats. The many thousand nerve endings controlling the involuntary muscles in the walls of minute blood vessels influence these muscles to contract, and the face turns ashy white. Other branches of this same sensitive nervous mechanism supplying the saliva-producing glands check their activity, and suddenly the mouth is dry; while still other nerves influencing certain involuntary muscles of the eye dilate the pupil, producing the wild, staring look of extreme fear. The stream of sensation then overflows into the voluntary muscles; the brow

of the blanched face is contracted, the jaw drops, the fingers stiffen, and the whole body is transfixed in terror. It may be but a stray sheet from the neighbour's wash flapping out suddenly in the darkness from between the rails of the fence—and no ghost at all! With every sensation which we call feeling there is relaxation or contraction of some of the innumerable involuntary muscle fibres which are interwoven with the structure of our vital organs. Through the ever-responsive, never-resting sympathetic nervous system, the desires of the mind are translated into the pulsations of the heart; the anguish of fear breaks out in beads of chilling sweat; anticipation fairly causes the mouth to water. All such reactions, absolutely beyond the influence of will, are accompanied with sensations, indistinct, indefinite, generalised, yet marking the temporal unity of mind and body. But, as already indicated, in the more intense expressions of our emotions, the voluntary muscles frequently take part, as illustrated in the clenched fist of defiance, the gnashing teeth of anguish, the stamping foot of impatience, the vehemently shaking head of denial, or the resolute, erect carriage of determination. Our thoughts may cause our bodies to fairly vibrate from finger-tip to heart's-core.

But other influences produce relaxation and contraction of these involuntary muscle threads which are so intimate a part of our vital organs. A drop of atropin solution in the eye, and the pupil widely dilates and stares hopelessly for days; while in the

other eye a solution of eserin reduces the pupil to pin-point size. Through the chronic self-poisoning of dietary ignorance and indulgence, involuntary muscle fibres in vessel and gland walls remain for days and months in constant spasm. A stiff toddy flushes the face for hours and affords a temporary relaxation to this condition of unnatural vessel spasm—a relaxation which stands for an evanescent comfort. On the other hand, the inveterate alcoholic lives in a state of continuous overrelaxation of vital tissues, due to the toxic, paralysing influence of his drug. But few have not experienced acute emotional depression, with accompanying disturbances in circulation, the result of self-poisoning from their own decomposed foods. Multitudes live autotoxic years of emotional misery and subconscious unrest because of the intimate, relentless action of body on mind through this same toxically disturbed sympathetic nervous system. Victims of periodic attacks of the blues—really acute expressions of modified melancholia—are emotionally depressed from food poisons. Such self-produced irritants stimulate overcontraction of the involuntary muscles. Tobacco and alcohol produce the opposite condition, and tend to paralyse, and thus relax, these same muscles. Hence the explanation of the periodic alcoholic, who will risk his soul for drink, as he feels the murderous black pall of his toxic depression settling upon him. Hence also the common habit of alcohol-using with overeating, the blind effort of unreason to anticipate food-produced disturbances,

to create a right out of two wrongs. Chronic emotional depression, the legitimate result of the broken balance between food and exercise, caused though it may be by the chemical toxins, reflects its damage not only on the body, but upon the mind itself, which it holds a prisoner without hope. Shallow breathing, sluggish circulation, defective elimination of excretions, inadequate glandular activity—in fact, a chronic lowered vital tone—are constant results of food and drug intoxication, while the identical conditions may be the constant accompaniments of low-grade emotional states.

Three sets of emotions are associated with every act. Emotions of anticipation precede all doing. When we look forward with pleasure to what is to happen, we enjoy the wholesome emotion of hope; if we plan with dread and fear, our anticipations are weighted down with the emotion of worry. In the midst of action we experience the emotions of participation, and if all is going as we would have it, we feel pleasure; but if things are wrong, if hurt or injury is occurring, we experience pain. After the act, when our anticipations have been fulfilled, we experience the pleasurable emotion of realisation called satisfaction; but if the experience has been hurtful or damaging, we look back upon the occurrence with a realisation of regret. And so the light and shadow, the tint and tone of emotion anticipates, accompanies, and follows our every act, and our feeling life is as restless as the ocean's tide. There are refinements of the emotional life associated with

the higher activities of our critical sense and our moral nature which we term sentiments, but no possible refinement can separate feeling from its relation to the physical. The most highly refined of our sensibilities lay hold upon circulation or secretion, or touch the magical eye, which ever responds to the feeling within. The sensations of ecstasy are as truly based on the physical as the cramps of stomach-ache.

**Power of the Emotions.**—There are emotions that invigorate, stimulate and elevate; there are those that wilt and crush and deaden. We have seen that the interrelation of mind and body, like all good rules, works both ways, and as hurtful toxic conditions can produce distressing emotional reactions, so active or prolonged mental states may call forth definite physical reactions. Who as a child has not felt the choking, aching lump in his throat—that distressing physical accompaniment of the yearning for home and mother too deep for tears? And who again, when caught red-handed in some childish depredation, has not found vocal chords paralysed, and been able to respond to the stern questionings of the unexpected parent only with painful efforts at swallowing! And who has not, a few years later, felt his cheeks fairly flame with livid and burning embarrassment, when, helpless in his awkwardness, he commits a *faux pas* in the presence of the Only One! And in later years the pain of our great sorrow has rested as a weight over the heart, pressing down as a leaden heel. Sweating, chilling, flushing

and paling, tearful or dry eyes, clammy or burning skins, choking throats, uncomfortable, cramping stomachs, and numerous other forms of bodily distress, may be but the physical reactions to disturbing emotions. Such discomforts, possibly prolonged through days or months, may be interpreted by the mind as painful sensations, the result of genuine physical disease. The more sensitive the nervous organisation, the more acute it is to the sensations of involuntary muscular movement which accompany feeling. In the untutored mind which is studying the body's sensations, there exists in such physical discomfort, in the numerous alterations in secretion or activity of vital parts, ample reason to confound the feelings normal to emotional change with the sensations common to disease. Here is found the explanation for that almost endless list of symptoms which, like the clouds of a stormy day, troop, one after another, across the horizon of the oversensitive, self-observant neurotic's life. Like poor, distraught, terror-tense Roderick Usher, who heard the beatings of his supposedly dead sister's buried heart for days before her tragic resurrection, many of the overwrought nervous live terror-tense, listening to each internal throb as though an avenging spirit threatened. Emotions may be as powerful for good as for damage. We shall learn later of the superbly beneficent influence of wholesome emotions as preserving, blessing and reconstructing forces in life.

The power of the emotions to influence the body, to produce disturbing and even distressing sensa-

tions, to discount physical strength and occasionally to curtail life itself, is of secondary importance to their power over the mind. Intellect, feeling and will are the interwoven, interrelated trinity which constitutes the mind, and in the mind's development the emotional life has the earliest chance and the most constant chance to influence—and influence it does, even the most stolid. Child of instinct, small wonder that it is the accepted directing force for the majority, and a suggesting, begging, nagging, appealing, demanding influence in all lives. "I feel" and "I don't feel,"—what portentous decrees abide in these simple words! How rare is the one with whom a day's association fails to elicit one or the other of these expressions! How extremely rare the man who rigorously ignores their wooing and beckoning insistence! How superb the character who knows not surrender to their dominating or insinuating authority, and whose "I believe" or "I will" is their potent master!

The feelings produce the lighting effects on life's canvas. The real substance of the mind's action, the truth and problems of intellectual activity, the realities of experience, are only seen in their true value by the clear eye of reason. The high lights and the depths of shadow in the picture are the result of emotional influence. But in many minds the substance is obscured by the colouring, is blurred by the lights and shadows; and reality, the actuality of conditions, the clear outlines of truth, are lost in the emotional haze. In the mind in which emotional

domination is persistent, the ability to estimate events at their true value fails to develop. The habit of basing opinions upon the evidence of feeling practically obstructs the development of reason, and when the testimony of feeling continues so much stronger than the judicial voice of intellect, lives of impulse result, lives in which decisions are based on morbid judgment, not on the counsel of reason. The logic of such lives is the logic of feeling, pure logic being crippled by false valuations, daily and hourly accepted as legal tender. And in the lives of the nervous, with temptation ever strong to false valuations and overreaction to surroundings, emotional dominance becomes a quick-sand in which the children of reason and will and happiness are engulfed. It is rare for the emotional temperament to profit by an hour of earnest contemplation. The brown-study habit has not been acquired, except in the perverted form of blue-black moods. Calm, accurate, logical, constructive thinking and reasoning are never possible in the face of unmastered, aggressive emotions.

The nervous temperament is remarkable for its sensitive emotional balance. But in nervousness, this margin is so narrow as to render the expenditure of force necessary to maintain nervous stability an energy-exhausting effort. Emotional exaltation is daily observed in unnecessary excitement, shallow enthusiasm, hysterical effervescence; but far more frequently emotional depression is the defect—depression varying from the momentary questioning of self to the intense and unreasoning desperation of

the feeling of suicidal unworthiness. One of the truly difficult problems in the reeducation of the neurotic is found in the attainment of emotional poise, of such stability of feelings as to conserve the disintegrating waste of constant emotional wear and tear. Such minds are prone to repudiate the dictates of reason in matters of spiritual teaching. Much of religious insistence is directed toward feeling and not toward reason; indeed, there are many who feel that in reasoning over matters spiritual they indulge in sacrilege. Therefore many, even of those who depend upon rational guidance and the leadings of common sense in their secular life, are easily led to exaggeration and fanaticism in religion. Church history teems with lifes of emotional exaltations and depressions encompassing the extremes of sainthood and demon-possession.

**Emotional Tyranny.**—Emotional supremacy stands for an instability as pronounced as the restless waveline on the fretful ocean's beach. And as the unstable sea itself, in many the emotions rise in damaging destructiveness and find expression in murderous fury. Man in the grip of primeval passions may become a frightful being. Anger may develop as suddenly as the tropical hurricane, and wrench and wreck and dash into pieces its victim. Anger springs full-fledged from man's fight-instinct, and is one of his most primitive adjustments to opposition. From its most intense expression in which its victim fairly sees red, anger may be manifested in many forms of lesser intensity. Sullenness and sulkiness

indicate partial repression, but impatience and irritability are much more common to the nervous; few of this class do not almost habitually surrender to this hurtful strength-leakage, and the habit of irritability grows apace, and many lives, even in their early strength, have been mastered thereby. So weak has their self-control become, that few hours are spent at work, or even in the seeking of pleasure, not dishonoured by eruptions of selfish irritability. Like the chronic alcoholic, they can only keep themselves decently comfortable by repeated sprees. This emotional weakness may become so ingrained as to quickly exhaust the will in its effort to resist these outbreaks, so in surrender relief is found from exhausting control. Hate is another of the destructive passions which, when it fastens itself upon the heart, with or without reason, curdles therein the very milk of human kindness—that essential food for happiness. Hate can fairly distort the body and dwarf its soul; it can poison the mind until reason is dead. But in the nervous it is not the excessive expressions of this passion that are commonly met, but its host of deformed children. The ever-reiterated dislikes, the antagonistic habit and the unfair judgments based upon such influences, explain a large part of the unhappily unsocial histories of many of the nervous.

But the emotional arch-enemy of human peace is fear. It plays a tremendous rôle in human life, and many, very many imperfect human adjustments are the result of its demoralising influences. It is the

father of deception, the influence which forces dishonourable surrender or disastrous and unworthy retreat, or shameful headlong flight from the post of honour or duties' demands. Fear paralyses effort and causes many to turn from the strife of life and subsist on the husks of indolence. Fear may produce unreasoning frenzy of action, with prodigal wasting of strength, fighting hopelessly, because irrationally. Fear appears in acute expressions of terror, follows the hunted soul through the years with the persistence of a shadow; fear enters the council chamber in the form of anticipatory dread, robbing many decisions of the zest and confidence which would bring success; fear in the form of wretched worry vitiates every plan and project. In their more violent expressions, anger, hate and fear may instantly lash the unrestrained neurotic into a froth of frenzy, in which mere brute instincts, with their appeal to coarse, crude force, have sway, and for the time being the whole kingdom of reason is in lawless chaos. But the total harm of these cataclysmic emotional convulsions is small when compared with the accumulation of unrelenting, insidious manifestations of the milder, habitual expressions of these same damaging emotions. Irritability, the habit of dislikes, hourly dreads and worries, associate themselves with and discount, discolour and deform the thoughts before they find expression through the will. The total damage of harmful emotional habits can only be realised through an intimate knowledge of the world's nervous suffering.

Such habits may not only injure each thought and impulse and desire, but may find more permanent expression in the form of moods which are chronic emotional states. In depressed individuals moods create an atmosphere which fairly poisons the thought-life.

In a rather serious form of nervousness termed psychasthenia, the patient is possessed with fear ideas, technically called "phobias." The psychasthenic's reason may tell him how absurd are his fears, but they are so much stronger in their insistence than the will is in its persistence, that surrender follows surrender. The psychasthenic may at times sadly laugh at his own foolish fears—but it is a sad laugh and a rare laugh, for he is a miserable sufferer of the disease of fear. He retreats, pale and agitated, from crowds, discontinues church and later the theatre, because of his unreasoning dread of crowded places; is unable to cross an open field because of the equally unreasoning dread of being where he cannot put his hands on something for support, or feel the presence of shelter, and so follows the fence from corner to corner rather than trust himself alone in the midst of space. He circles around the edge of the park, for he is miserable in the midst of its spacious beauties. Again, he is in a panic of terror in a room with closed doors and windows, and assures you that he would "die of fright" were he accidentally locked in a cramped closet. There is a fear of dirt and a fear of filth which is unholy—the fear of contamination, of infec-

tion, or of germs, which causes its poor victim to wash and wash and wash, often until hands and arms are raw and even ulcerated. No dish is fit for use which he has not seen painstakingly and thoroughly washed and rewashed. The laundry is returned the second and third time for fear it is still contaminated.

Modern psychology dips rather deeply into man's primitive instincts to find a satisfactory explanation for these unreasonable fears—fears which, unchecked by rigid and resolute self-control, or if this is impossible, by the force of wise counsel, may lead from a condition of physical ridiculousness to the tragedy of mental eruption. The writer was recently thrown with such a fear victim for twenty-four hours on a sleeper. During that time he gargled and rinsed his throat at least twenty times with repeated cups of ice-water, into which, on each occasion, was poured a teaspoonful of reasonably strong antiseptic; and after each gargling process, from ten to twenty minutes would be spent in vociferous coughing and hawking and spitting, to the legitimate disgust of all the passengers. Between times he made frequent attempts to see into his throat in the smoking-room mirrors, making repeated explanations that he had just spent a night in a city having a national reputation as a tuberculosis resort, and 'that he knew he had a germ in his throat, because he could feel it!' Fear was so strong, reason so helpless, and will so weak in this poor man, so sane on general subjects as to have made a comfortable fortune in lumber interests, as to allow him to

thus make himself a public nuisance, an object of ridicule and revulsion. Even the serious professional statement that the throat of the healthy child harbours millions of germs, and that if perchance he did have a temporary extra tubercular supply, there was no danger unless he injured the mucous membrane of his throat and made it possible for them to gain admission into the tissues, had no influence. Fear was gripping his throat muscles, throwing them into a state of continuous contraction, which he interpreted as the presence of germs, and with might and main he made all possible effort to damage the protective coverings of his throat, and to invite danger from the germ-laden dust of travel infinitely more real than the germs of the sanitary but dreaded health-resort from which he was fleeing.

The Western mind looks with aversion and pity upon the poor, mutilated, deformed victims of religious zeal, the mendicant votaries of India, self-tortured for conscience' sake; and yet could we but have revealed the twisted, mutilated, deformed souls of many of the victims of the self-torture of fear, we would stand aghast at the damning influence of this brutal emotional tyrant. Life is strewn with unhappy nervous wrecks, the hapless victims of fear of disease, fear of contamination, fear of infection, fear of failure, fear of poverty, fear of ridicule, fear of discovery, fear of enemies, fear of dishonour, fear of to-morrow, fear of the now, fear of death and fear of eternity—fearsome, frightsome, fearful fear!

We have thus rapidly reviewed the nature of our

mind's emotions, the intimate interrelation between physical and feeling conditions; we have seen how interactive each is upon the other, how common is the presence of defective and damaging emotional habits in the nervous, how prone indeed is the nervous temperament to become a victim of its feeling life. Worthy invalidism presents many reasons for patience and gentleness and love and devotion, and offers one of life's most perfect objects for wholesome service; but some invalids are repellently ugly in their sickness, an ugliness growing out of the unworthiness of their emotional life. The dominating impatience, selfish petulance and heartless disregard for all rights save those of their own whims, convert them into at best but pitiable objects of commiseration. And the lesson comes clear and strong that for the best of us there are many emotions which should be habitually shunned; that fear is to be feared and hate hated; that it is only through mastery of the emotional, ease of reserve of strength, power to do thus and yet more, that we may avoid premature exhaustion and the life of chronic weariness, so constant with the emotional spendthrift. Until mastered, our emotional self is ever ready to rebel at reason, is eager and tugging to assume the ascendency and subjugate reason and will, and to rule our minds with a despotic tyranny which knows no law but fickleness, considers no time but now, which recognises no master but desire, and obeys no voice but the call for gratification.

## CHAPTER XIII

### ILLS AND OUR WILLS

**Nature of the Will.**—Man's will is his great battle-field upon which, daily and hourly, contending forces of his nature meet in strife. Instinct wars with Reason, Desire is ever attempting to overcome Resolution, Indolence creeps upon the rear of Ambition, and Indecision hovers as a pestilence over the camp of Determination to weaken the mind's best fighters. The best and worst of the mind's forces meet on this field of strife to wage a warfare often as long as life itself, for rarely does absolute victory crown the efforts of character's defenders, or complete surrender leave character in the hands of its foes.

To the intellect has been ascribed as its unique superiority the power of selection. Out of life's interminable multiplicity of possible thoughts, the mind elects from moment to moment those to which it shall give consideration; but intellect would be helpless, and find its selection of as little permanency or use as the child's soap-bubble, were it not for the power of the will to hold the mind's attention upon the selected object of thought; and herein is the will's omnipotence. It can attend or refuse to attend to the object of thought presented to it by the intellect. The reader can will to note carefully the mean-

ing of each word of this page, associating each one clearly with the others, pausing or repeating, if necessary, that all may be plain; or he can glance from one line to another, keeping his eyes on the page for a half-hour, while his mind is intently engaged in planning a business venture, analysing the possible meaning of a neighbour's obscure remark, or trying to decide how the family income may be pieced out to meet the growing needs of a growing family. The undiseased will is free to choose that upon which it shall expend its force. In fact, the very term "will," as commonly accepted, signifies freedom.

Much of our willing is practically effortless, while some of the most exhausting of human activities are found in the intense mental concentration of conscious, deliberate determination. Just as the heart muscle contracts year after year with no consciousness of fatigue, so we can give attention to selfish interests and personal affairs and pleasures without conscious effort of will; and many a character fails to develop recognisable force or perceptible influence, because its will has never turned its attention from what might almost be called its vegetative functions. The strongest physique may be rapidly exhausted through active and aggressive muscular exercise pitilessly pushed, and in the course of a few hours physical rest becomes imperative; with almost equal rapidity the mind wearies, and an unquestioned sense of exhaustion becomes manifest when the will holds attention relentlessly upon some difficult problem, refusing to release it from its task

until it has reached a decision, even in the face of perplexing complexities. In the power or weakness of will abides the strength or frailty of personality, and no mental quality approximates in value that of a highly developed power of active attention—an attention which reaches out beyond narrow and selfish and personal interests, and like the patriarch of old, wrestles with the unknown, refusing to let go until it has received a blessing.

Genuine will power is only developed in the face of conscious effort. No situation is ever presented to the mind which is not capable of a variety of solutions. One of these will be over a path of least resistance, the easiest way out, and the easiest way is usually the way which affords the least immediate discomfort, which requires the least effort at the time. There is likewise a path of greatest resistance, a solution which demands present sacrifices, perchance of time, of effort, or pride or means, but which, reason and conscience assert, will prove ultimately best and right. No powerful will was ever developed which did not deliberately and repeatedly choose the harder path, and *will* to face and meet and overcome present avoidable difficulties. True will is only developed through the habitual meeting of those situations which require the expenditure of conscious, consistent effort; but no mental habit pays so rich a return upon the investment made. The habit of active willing, the habit of meeting each difficulty squarely and resolutely, now, will gradually become automatic, and the efforts attendant upon

decision, resolution and perseverance become less and less conscious, as the growth of the power to *do* becomes more and more inherent. Herein abides the secret of the mastery of masterful lives. And to the master, much which the weak call complex is simple, and more which they call difficult is easy, and most of the burden of life's problems but contributes to the joy of living.

Endurance finds its strength in will. As a type of humanity, the nervous endure poorly. Through quickly diverted attention, their minds are rapidly attracted and held by small discomforts. The writer recalls a neurotic patient who, before the days of telephones, sent for her physician after midnight, and upon his arrival pitifully asked for something to relieve a mosquito-bite! And no statistician will ever compute the waste of human time and energy lost through unnecessary demands of easily distracted, weak-willed neurotics. Slight discomforts through inordinate attention rapidly grow into unbearable distresses. Moderate pains become "frightful;" the heat is "unbearable;" and all headaches are "perfectly agonising." On the other hand, the developed normal will is capable of pushing the limit of human endurance far beyond the power of most of life's discomforts to disturb. With what genuine respect the normal mind contemplates the nobility of highly-developed superiority to suffering! With what reverence we think of Gladstone, as, paralysed, returning to Hawarden from a health resort and being carried for the last time up the

steps by his devoted servants, he was heard patiently murmuring, "Why cumbereth I the ground?" No whining complaint, no weakling's plea for sympathy or pity, but the strong soul's recognition of the uselessness of its worn-out body, and yearning to push the limits of endurance beyond all touch of time! It is within the power of each earnest life to slowly but surely push further and further away that impinging circle of irritations and discomforts and distress and suffering, and what we call trouble, and even the pain of sorrow.

The emotions of the nervous are keen, active, eager things, ever ready to entice or to distress, always eager to dominate thought selection, teasing Reason, wooing Reason, blinding Reason; and Reason would indeed be helpless in the face of this coquette, this enchantress, this sometime witch, were it not for the support of Will. Reason can command intellect to select objects of consideration more constructive, more wholesome, more righteous than those which instinct and its emotions are trying to force to the front. Through the aid of will, attention may be fixed upon that which is practical, strengthening or ennobling, and herein lies the basis of that fundamental and superb quality of human strength—self-control. Thoughts involving surrender or weakness or evil-doing, if allowed to occupy the attention unrestrained, tend sooner or later to result in damaging action. Self-control does not consist in merely holding back the undesirable, harmful or weakening thought, but in the summoning of a

wholesome idea into the field of consciousness and a resolute attention thereto. Even as the damaging thought can produce harmful action, so the habitually represented constructive thought, resolutely attended, will sooner or later find its expression in beneficent action, for action is the end to which all true will is directed.

The physical is capable of attracting the mind through so large a variety of sensations, the mind itself can present to consciousness so comfortable a stream of easy-going diversions, that through the long years of character-development, repeated will effort is necessary to keep the higher interests of life in view. Hence the wise insistence of all great religions on a daily period of serious devotion. Feeling is capable of thrilling man's mind with beauteous sounds of harp or voice, of inspiring his thought with exquisite touches of beauty, of enchanting his imagination with promises and memories until he fairly dreams himself into bliss. Intellect weighs the worlds in its balance, estimates the attraction power of unseen suns, counts the microbes upon the needle's point, and reduces all matter to its atoms. But without will, emotions and intellect are vain. Man must will, not merely think and feel, if he would master himself—himself, the greatest wonder of the universe.

**Enemies of the Will.**—So superior a quality does not, could not exist anywhere without attracting enemies—enemies ever eager to rob it of all virtue, to win its very strength for their uses. Indolence is

one of the most common of these, indolence finding expression in many forms. The child of nature surrenders to it so completely as to never give will a chance for development. Many living in the tropics have for generations been free from the necessity of sustained effort. Nature has ministered to their comfort through a genial climate, an abundance of self-reproducing foods, and in the absence of necessity for effort of will, sluggishness and shiftlessness of body and mind have resulted. These undeveloped children have existed through the ages, and are today less advanced in self-control than the animals of their own forests.

Wealth, plenty, the unwise provisions of ancestry, have removed from the lives of too many the necessity for special effort or sacrifice; and so, in the midst of affluence and surrounded by the richest of opportunities, many will-less, spineless imitations of manhood and womanhood develop. Absence of effort means absence of will, and the absence of will too frequently makes impossible the effort directed by reason, and thus a vicious circle may be established. The will-less ever float hither and thither with the tide, or down the stream, but are never seen climbing the Mountain of Difficulty. Progress and development are ever products of will.

We have already noted the eternal pull of the emotions, which persistently strive to retain their early mastery upon the life; and repeated and keen are the battles between desire and volition. Many a life has failed of success because of the half-heartedness

of this fight, or the compromises which have been made. Surrender to fatigue of body, to fatigue of mind which accepts self-pity, soon leads to easy fatigue of will, which, when dominant, becomes quickly assertive, and through fear is magnified into nervously damaging exhaustions. Indolence accepts fatigue in its numerous varieties as an excuse for inaction, and inaction soon produces physical and mental toxins which but increase fatigability—the blight of so many modern lives. There is a will of inertia which accepts what is, rarely making any effort to displace that which, introduced by suggestion or feeling, occupies the focus of attention; a will which slips languidly from one thought to another—the will of the inconsequential mental weakling. The mind of the dreamer, while mentally more constructive than that of the drifter, usually produces a will equally friable. The dreamer may picture and construct and decide never so beautifully, but in his very inaction, in his failure to put his decisions into practice, flabbiness of will is assured.

Indecision, another enemy of the will, while usually found in those of poorly developed intellects or of weak characters, may exist in otherwise quite fine types of personality. Will is not only an aggressive and productive force, but has a restraining or so-called inhibitive power, and in indecision these two qualities become arrayed, one against the other. For the moment the positive expression of volition says, "I will," but immediately questions arise as to the wisdom and expediency, or the rightness, or the pro-

priety of the act, and inhibition says, "I must not." What an exhausting battle it is! How much of humanity's vital force and power has been wasted in these internal conflicts of the "I must not" contending with the "I will!" Could intellect but select wisely and present for the will's affirmation or rejection only such proposals as would stimulate immediate and decided action, and could our decisions remain eternally fixed, unless added knowledge should give reason for reconsideration, how much more advanced in all that stands for mastery and power and character would civilisation be! But eager and burning desire and yearning, seductive appetites and stubborn, hard-hearted rebellion, do not so easily down. And the fight goes on—that lifelong fight on will's battlefield.

Many of the conscientious nervous are assailed with doubts, doubts which they have not the will-strength to check. Reason may repeatedly reveal the solution of their questioning, but fear, that parasite which many have allowed to grow stronger than will, out-argues reason; and when such fear is entrenched within our natures, it delights in tantalising us with the doubting folly. And what a hectoring troupe of miserably insistent ideas, doubt forces into the field of our consciousness! Doubt romps riotously over all which is sacred and comforting in our minds; doubt questions the wisdom of our decisions, the purity of our thoughts, the sincerity of our acts, the truths of our religion, our possibility of salvation; doubt suggests the certainty of damnation, the

helplessness in our fight for good; doubt enters into our most sacred reading to suggest disquieting interpretations, and taunt with the hopelessness of our "unpardonable sins;" doubt magnifies life's inevitable mistakes into irrevocable, soul-shriveling acts. Doubt may attack the character of friend or wife and rob us of our faith in human nature, or doubt inverted may make us wretchedly conscious of the same questioning attitude toward us in the minds of those we meet. We doubt our own hearts, our own minds, our own souls. The doubter takes counsel here, there and yonder, and if ill, the influence of his physician's advice hardly remains with him till the first prescription has been filled, and indecision robs him of ability to put into operation the very counsel which would lead him away from his paralysing weaknesses. Doubt is the great divider of the mind's energies, the thief of that strength which abides in decision, even its decisions of error. Doubt is at the foundation of vacillating lives. The unstable, changeable nature may be due to the superficial emotional control of impulse; but indecision, with its "yea" to-day and to-morrow "nay," finds not the peace or rest of stability. Vacillation hastens the shopper home to countermand the delivery of goods just ordered; vacillation is the basis of those depreciated lives whose rudderless minds are restlessly tossed about on the sea of life.

The so-called comfortable and well-to-do classes have few demands made upon them to-day for real self-denial. Man has so harnessed the powers of

Nature as to convert the mountain torrent, the lightning power, the stored-up fuel of the ages, into tireless, unquestioning servants. Steam, gasoline and electricity carry his messages, do his errands, haul his commerce and flit him hither and thither, almost with the speed of his own wishes. Gas ranges, electric elevators, steam dishwashers, public laundries, commercial bakeries and shops provided with goods from all lands, the check-book and fountain-pen, and the ever-willing auto at the door, have taken from domestic life veritable mountains of effort. Yet, not satisfied with the removal of much drudgery that a generation ago accepted as essential, we are to-day exercising wit and ingenuity to avoid even the semblance of possible discomfort. Self-indulgence looms larger and larger into latter-day living as an enemy of the will. The enervating process begins early. The ills of childhood are coddled with an assiduity which would merit the development of some fundamental virtue, rather than the inculcation of a character-disintegrating habit. Youth, departing from its ancient pride, pales with every pain, wilts at the touch of weariness, is frequently abed, the object of solicitude and medication, through the discomforts of gustatory indulgences; and maturity, that maturity which should represent the strength of manhood and the patience of womanhood, fails to arrive. Instead, a growing intolerance of all that discounts coveted ease, a rabid impatience under the smart of even deserved pain, and repeated surrender to frequently recurring periods of ex-

haustion, indicate the essential frailty of—yes, the practical absence of—wills in many of the nervous.

Surrender to weakness of body and depression of spirit is a seductive error. Self-pity, that craven mocker of self-respect, frequently forgets its semblance of respectability, and covertly, and later obviously, begs in the very highways for the mawkish sympathy that could only satisfy the sick of will. Often the blight of self-indulgences does not fall so heavily, but is able to forget itself the while, demanding only an occasion unstinted exercise of those primal passions of anger or hate, or the luxury of an unfought fear. Many have the stability to be good fair-weather companions, but with the first sign of stress or storm let loose their elemental emotions, and reveal the calm of the preceding days as a superficial expression; their foundations were built of riotous uncertainty.

Wilfulness, a treacherous enemy of true will, is a common manifestation found in the selfish. With the ability of will itself, it attends and decides and holds fast to its own: to its own weaknesses, to its own impulses—ever and anon to its own. Wilfulness can set its face as adamant, and with eyes of steel and fist of mail, resist the appeals of need, of love, of reason, or of tenderness. The wilful live the day, the year—sometimes a miserable, hard generation—of rebellious resistance to real or fancied interferences with their conception of their own rights. Indulgence cries, "I want what I want, and I want it now!" and Wilfulness adds, "And I will have it!"

Coy Emotion courts Wilfulness, who laughs at Reason and mocks Judgment, and never lets an opportunity pass to discredit true Will, its normal master, more frequently its nominal master—not uncommonly its servile slave. Wilfulness accepts Impatience as its aid, and the growth of its power goes hand in hand with the loss of self-restraint. Every purely selfish expression of human determination and resolution marks the growth of wilfulness and the weakening of true volition.

It is a fundamental truth difficult for all to learn, one which the cleverness of the ages has attempted to negate, but one which wisdom through all time has accepted, that good of body and good of mind and good of soul come to man through conscious and consistent effort. And power and strength grow out of sacrifice, and sacrifice ever indicates a surrender of ease. The whole story of human and personal progress is an unmitigated tale of denials to-day—denials of rest, denials of repose, and comfort, and ease and pleasure—that to-morrow may be richer. A rationally directed will is the force which, from the emergence into prominence of the first superman to the present leaders of mankind, has been the dominating power determining his progress. Strength of body may be denied; organic weaknesses which skill, nor patience, nor effort can overcome, may limit physical activities and make robustness impossible; but every life can provide for itself the opportunities for the development of will-strength. The invalid abed can as resolutely attend to those thoughts which are self-

disciplinary, educative, constructive, as the athlete disporting on the oval green before the applauding thousands. The one vital mental error which no delicacy of feeling, nor heights of erudition can counterbalance, is the failure to cultivate the will.

**Wills and Our Ills.**—When we enter into a full understanding of those essential laws of health which, if generally observed, would make swiftly and positively for higher standards of well-being, we are surprised at their comparative simplicity. Straight indeed is the way of health, but it is narrow, so narrow that few there be that pass that way. There are frequent by-paths leading therefrom, paths that meander through the apparent coolness and shade of the adjacent wooded valleys, where the murmur of the rivulet, the whistle and the call of the birds, and the beauty and scent of the flowers beckon to the weary traveller from the dusty, ever-ascending, shadeless, straight way; and Emotion coaxes Reason, till even Reason at times counsels Will to turn aside and rest, to turn aside and indulge, to go his own sweet way, rather than to follow the highway. It takes a strong will to live true to the simple laws of health, in the face of the tantalisation of temptation.

The habit of discussing our feelings is growing. The finer reserve of our forefathers in matters as personal as health and discomfort is being swept away to-day by the willingness of high and low to discuss their ills, in and out of season. This delicacy —a strength accepted as an unquestioned standard of our forefathers' decorum—is being lost in the

chorus of whines and complaints, swamped in the eloquence of description of selfish ills, submerged in that dissonance of sound, the "confabulated" expression of modern tales of woe. And ills beget ills, and discussion of ills suggests more ills, and with the nervous, particularly, one's ills infect another, even as measles is passed from child to child. To keep our ills to ourselves, excepting only the privileged ear of our medical or spiritual counselor, stands not only for obvious culture and a mark of refinement, but, in these days of inveterate gabble about personal sensations, indicates a will that can will.

It was a fortunate day for the world's neurotics when the civilised governments decided upon concerted action to limit the distribution and sale of narcotic drugs. Oversensitiveness to all stimulants makes the neurotic a poorly-resisting victim to the allurements of drug-ease and the fascinations of drug stimulation. Coffee fiends, dope fiends, cigarette fiends, narcomaniacs of all types, are recruited chiefly from the hereditary neurotics, and every neurotic's future safety is jeopardised when he slips off the bridle of self-control, and allows drug-control, either stimulant or sedative, to assume temporary mastery. Alcohol tempts in a hundred appealing forms—appealing to palate, through social customs, invading medicines under the term of "tonic" and "digestants," appearing under the guise of "food" —appealing to taste, to pride, to fear and to apparent need. But in all its various disguises it is only alcohol—one of the most treacherous influences

which can be introduced into the life of the depressed nervous. With its temporary stimulative action it brushes away the lowering clouds, and with its secondary narcotic influence it relieves for the time the pain of dejection, wiping out, apparently, the sense of inadequacy so common to this type of the ill; it promises a quick and happy solution of those moods which require so much strength of purpose to otherwise combat. But while most normal men and a few normal women can indulge in the artificial, efficiency-reducing comforts of alcohol without apparent hurt, the neurotic pays a tremendous price for his evanescent relief. Alcohol gradually robs him of even his defective stability, and but increases the intensity of the struggle of will to hold its own. This and more can be said of opium and all its various combinations, and even still more concerning the rapidly demoralising, mania-producing cocaine.

In its weakening effect on the will exists the most potent argument against the cigarette. Practically all tobacco users admit a certain sensory relief, and temporary comfort and sensuous satisfaction from their indulgence. The average man smoking two or three times a day probably suffers little for his half-hour of "solid comfort," but the cigarette smoker is rarely one with the poised resistance to limit his indulgences to two or three a day. As a rule it is a cigarette and a half-dozen deep inhalations in the face of every irritation, before any constructive effort is made—an artificial adjustment to every demand; and in his frequently recurring cigarette he

finds a panacea for the little ills and discomforts of life, by a dependence on something outside of himself, a resort to a drug, an ignoring of the rights of will to determine, to decide, and to do, in its own strength. Ultimately the temporary comfort of the oft-repeated cigarette fails to satisfy, and when a stronger test of resistance comes there is no will to face its demands, and alcohol, or even a more powerful drug, is resorted to for the sense of strength needed in the absence of an assertive will. This same volitional defect explains the frequent trips to the soda-fountain for glasses of "dope," the "pick-me-up" of afternoon tea or extra strong coffee, the "eye-opener" to make a honeycombed disposition respectable for the breakfast table, the "nightcap" to make possible quick self-forgetfulness in sleep. Thus wills are being displaced by drugs, character by dope, and wilfulness and our ills develop hand in hand.

Erroneous thinking may disturb health through the wrong selection of ideas; emotional discord may destroy the peace and quietude of our feeling-life so essential to well-being, but absence of stability through lack of wills able to will, means the wasteful drifting of doubt and indecision—means too often the nervous wreckage of inertia, cowardly surrender or unholy wilfulness.

## CHAPTER XIV

### CLEAR THINKING

**The Interwoven Mind.**—In our study of humanity's nervous needs, we have already realised that the complex nature of man may be likened to a group of notes, capable of producing either a full, rich, harmonious chord, or a jangling discord—if even one note is imperfect, the harmony is broken. Man's composite elements are so interrelated and interdependent as to constitute a practical unit, a principle which becomes most emphatic when his mental qualities are considered. For convenience we study his intellectual, emotional and volitional needs, but the unity of his mind must ever be clear—the influence and dependence of each of these qualities upon the others being fundamental ones.

Since the dawn of nervousness, the majority of cures of this disorder have been effected through the emotional nature by means of suggestion. Charms and incantations, the powerful influence of reputed sacred relics, the force of personality of the medicine man, priest or physician, the very price paid for, or energy expended, in carrying out extensive pilgrimages or elaborate treatments—these and innumerable other influences have entered the mind through suggestion to displace ideas of disease with those of

health. But in this day of increasing accuracy and discrimination of knowledge, the uncertainties of mere irrational, emotional displacement are rapidly being relegated to the use of the ignorant, the self-deceived, or to mercenary impostors. Accurate thinking, the substitution of facts for error and of reason for feeling, forms a soil in which nervous stability can grow and bring forth abundant fruit. In the preceding three chapters we have seen how many mental influences play active parts in producing the distressing symptoms of nervousness. Few have suffered from this disorder who are not in need of more or less extensive, wholesome mental readjustment. Many generations of progress will elapse before the inherently suggestible—those ever difficult to influence through reason—will be displaced by others capable of logical mastery of their weaknesses. But the only sound and abiding basis for cure of nervousness exists in rational re-education. Just as definitely as skilled intelligence is necessary to decide the dosage and hour of giving diphtheria antitoxin to cut short an attack of that dread disease, as certainly, though less dramatically rapid, unfortunately, is there a relation between intelligence and the cure of nervousness; and clear thinking is the beginning of intelligence.

**Thought Selection.**—Our thoughts drift through the early years of consciousness so simply, so naturally, so inconsequentially, that we may be quite grown before we realise their import, their fundamental seriousness, their tremendous significance;

and drift they do, until we attend and select. As we have seen, attention is the will's regal power, and selection the intellect's unquestioned supremacy. There are few minds which do not need to give thoughtful consideration to a more active selection of their mental content. So easy it is, apparently so natural, to be passive in this, and to allow the thoughts to chase one another, a sportive, motley, unmarshalled procession. Too frequently all serious thinking or objective thinking comes as a burden, and the happy-go-lucky thought life is reverted to, the moment relief from the pressure of necessity removes the task of active thought selection. At all times we are choosing our thought life. We passively choose when we attend to that which enters our mind, the suggestion of occasion, whether relevant or irrelevant to our mental needs or the soul's welfare. We actively choose when we dwell upon that which instructs and constructs, that which stands for growth, that which reason can pass and commend. Just as physical indolence may become an exhaustion-claiming habit, so passive thinking may excuse itself and resist the introduction of active, objective thought habits on the basis of undue fatigue.

The question of interest plays a vital part in influencing thought habit. In the passive or untrained mind, sustained attention is the product of interest, the mind lending itself briefly and but weakly to any thought not associated with interest; and as the number of interests is often pitiably limited, or but shallow or inconsequential, the mind finds little to feed

upon through the multiplying days of a life-time, but self and the superficial. Not so with a mind that has attained maturity, for it finds an ever-increasing ability to stimulate interest through attention. The mind which has actively and determinedly formed the habit of thought selection, finds an early and growing reward in the multiplication of its interests, in its capacity for quick-forming interests, and in its wonderful ability to find novel and attractive associations of the new with the old. And so by consistent development of the habit of active selection, the stream of thought, that marvellous, unending trooping of ideas across the stage of consciousness, may become more and more subject to control; and gradually this objectionable character, that distasteful, disturbing, disfiguring thought personage, may be eliminated, displaced by others bearing strength, calm and competence—constructive, healing thoughts.

It is a law of our consciousness that it must have an object, but consciousness itself seems quite indifferent as to the character of the thought shoved into the limelight of the moment. All it demands is something to look at, to talk about, to remark upon. It remains for the intellect to protect consciousness from years of wasteful attention by selecting that which is wholesome and productive, and which contributes to mental growth. Consciousness is very apt to respond to the promptings of wish and desire, and to unprofitably fritter away the mind's time and energies, paddling about the great sea of impossibility. Much of the will's energy is wasted in con-

trolling desires and impulses—a waste quite unnecessary did the mind select more carefully its thought contents. Thought selection can hem in and limit and displace desire. The mind of developed active selection can quickly crowd extravagant and unprofitable impulse into the background, and relieve will of damaging, tantalising conflict.

A vital element in the training of active selection is the development of thought rejection. Memory is the natural product of attention, the average poor memory being usually but an evidence of defective clear thinking at the moment of new thought introduction. But most that enters the mind in these days of voluminous attractions should be forgotten, must be forgotten, for the sake of clearness of those thoughts which are to be treasured for future use. The art of forgetting may be promoted until all which is irrelevant to reality, and the needs and uses of the individual life, is dismissed. Every progressive business or professional man has in his desk appropriate drawers and pigeonholes in which are filed classified groups of documents, accounts, pamphlets, catalogues and other useful papers. Watch the trained, systematic man as he rapidly opens his daily mail and sorts its contents. If not accustomed to such methods, you will be surprised, probably dismayed, at the amount of material that never finds an abiding place in drawer, pigeonhole or classified assortment, but is consigned to the waste-basket. In response to your question, he will probably reply with a serious smile that his waste-basket is the most

valuable piece of furniture in his office. Were it not for that, a few weeks would find the room, now the acme of order, piled ceiling high and uninhabitable because of the accumulated mass of useless trash. So it is with a mind which has not attained the power of rejection, has not developed active and aggressive forgetfulness. Attention never accumulates strength, unless, aided by wise selection, it has developed a generalised power of inattention. Only one subject at a time can be given clear thought, and lacking selective attention, many a mind is a perfect hodge-podge of chaotic jumble, half attending, half knowing—a confusing clutter of material, with thought-clearness obscured and well-nigh impossible. There can be no growth of constructive selection which does not involve an equally active increase in the ability to ignore, to skip and to forget.

Much of the jumble of hazy, confused thought life, so common and so detrimental to that mental clearness which stands strongly for mental soundness, is due to a crowding of the mind as a careless eater crowds his stomach. Quantity, not discriminated quality, is poured in without consideration of the system's needs—unmasticated, bolted. The clearing of much mental confusion and the breaking up of damaging mental habits is within the power, if seriously attempted, of every individual possessing a mind of average ability. The determination to insist daily upon the clearing up of some subject of recognised half-knowledge or of obscurity, to daily think out in its fulness some one simple idea; and the

formation of the habit of cultivating our power of rejection by promptly and definitely slipping a profitable thought in place of a wasteful one, are forms of exercise as valuable to our mental health as are deep breathing and spread-eagles to the physical. Even as the daily forcing of our muscles to do sufficient honest work to rid the system of its poisons, requires, and indeed develops, a certain moral force, so our training in thought selection and thought substitution requires genuine honesty of purpose.

In these simple suggestions lies the foundation of our mental readjustment. Few lives are so devoid of interest, and none so astute in erudition, but can find an inexhaustible supply of material available to cultivate clear thinking habits. Clear thinking, like charity, should begin at home, and a thousand practical openings are at hand. Our speech, that superb medium of thought communication, offers almost inexhaustible opportunities for acquiring habits of accuracy and improved selection. Most of us would be astonished if we were shown how many words in common use we mispronounce, and how many more we fail to apply advantageously. Attention to the speech of our friends, not with criticism, but with the sole object of suggestive comparison, will disclose constant opportunities for acquiring accuracy and selective nicety. The guidance of five careful minutes daily, at the dictionary, proves ultimately a large economy. And, as we shall later find, accuracy of expression breeds accuracy of thought and feeling. Hardly a page is read but contains some word,

some reference, some name, involved for us in more or less obscurity; so much of what we see and even handle and use is but superficially understood, and has for years been lazily and hazily thought. There is no one who cannot profit by a consistent, systematic clearing up of his own mental obscurities, and each thread pulled out of the tangle is that much more material to be devoted to future practical use.

The advice of daily thinking out some thought in its fulness can, of course, be followed only in a relative way. There is a relatedness of all thought which makes an endless chain, provided we had all the links. But an earnest clearing up of some thought which we recognise as confused, or setting aside of others lacking practical solution, with a willingness to alter earlier prejudices, decisions or opinions, will rarely fail to secure for us more light, and to provide more satisfactory grounds for our conclusions. Perseverance in this habit of calm daily analysis of some question or problem or situation will in a year produce remarkable results—only, however, if in honesty and fairness we determine to put aside every element which does not appeal to us as being absolutely truthful.

So many of the nervous are made wretched by thoughts they cannot down, all because in their early training they failed to develop that power given the normal mind to promptly eliminate the harmful, to replace the irritating with the soothing, the harassing by the strengthening, the tempting by the mastering. As we develop the philosopher's power to se-

lect and attend only to the best, we develop the ability to bring life to our own terms, and to laugh at its threats.

**Eliminating Mental Error.**—All progress is based upon the displacement of error by truth, and again, so far as our present existence is concerned, truth and error are but relative. We cannot know either of them as absolute. The better the mind, the more fully it recognises its own tendency to erroneous thoughts, and the more one develops, the more conscious he becomes of the inaccuracy of much of his thinking. Substituting sentiment, or more often sentimentality, for reality, mixing fancy with fact and the unprovable idealistic with ideas, many accept error and neglect the formation of elemental but fundamental habits of thought life. But other minds have surrendered absolutely to misthinking, and accept grossly perverted habits of thought as normal, or unavoidable, or irremediable. Through false pride, mental indolence or uncombated narrowness, they have failed to cultivate the critical, that sense of finer discrimination between truth and error, between right and wrong, between selfishness and unselfishness, between strength and weakness, between feeling and reason. Such minds not only remain incapable of selecting and accepting and utilising the constructive facts of daily life, but frequently become so perverted as to foolishly deny these very facts, and vainly attempting to substitute warped, self-interested opinions, go pitifully through losing years, insistent upon the rightness of their errors. Like the

deluded ostrich, thinking to find safety by hiding his head in a hole, their denial of reality is robbing them of their capacity for true enjoyment and genuine happiness, is weakening and disintegrating their ability; and may sour and embitter their personalities, and even warp and narrow their characters.

Persistent difficulty will be found in the mind which has allowed itself to entertain prejudice, in displacing this defective form of judgment with that based upon reason. Few mental habits so quickly obscure the clear light of truth, so quickly shut the doors and windows and draw the shades of the mind's understanding, as do prejudices introduced into early training. Many of the nervous find it difficult, if not impossible, to dispel their belief in their own "inherited" deficiencies and disorders, when in truth very much of what the neurotic blames upon ancestry is simply a warped mass of harmful ideas taught him in his youth, or opinions gathered from ignorant sources, which go on year after year, limiting and hurting. The practical inability of the Jew to fairly criticise Judaism, or the Christian, Christianity, or the Japanese, Shintoism, while quite capable of reasoning without undue emotion upon the arguments for and against the marvels in religions not their own, illustrates the common difficulty of all to discredit early religious influences. But for him who would attain mental supremacy, a willingness must come to relentlessly hunt out error —to pursue it endlessly—which determination, resolutely undertaken and consistently maintained,

gradually reveals truth. Again pride, and always prejudice, satisfactory conclusions—ofttimes our most comfortable resting-places of thought—opinions which we have uttered in the conceit of confidence, unfounded faiths and vain hopes, must be ousted and replaced by the stranger, Truth. Perchance the opportunity does not come daily to rectify error, but if the resolution is resolute that we will never allow conscious error to remain unmolested, we are using building material only comparable to structural steel, concrete and granite.

Recognising Reality.—If the neurotic would mend the error of his mental ways, he will early learn that extravagance of speech stands for distortion of thought; that clear, logical thinking is hurt by inordinate expression—and he will rapidly eliminate his superlatives and many of his comparatives. "Beastly weather," "insufferably hot," "horrible pains," "unutterable bores," "nights without a wink of sleep," "splitting headaches," "offensive presences," the "worst-evers," and the whole vocabulary of inaccuracy—an inaccuracy which has long since lost even the charm of increased vividness—must give way to temperance and fairness and honesty in description. The one who habitually defaces reality by extremes of expression, if not already nervous, is travelling nervousward.

Many neurotics early discredit habits of saving reality. They devote their thought life to the stimulation of feeling rather than in the direction of doing. In what glorious sprees of emotional intoxi-

cation, ranging from surrender to depressions as absolute as gutter drunkenness, to the glorious revels of intense, overwrought excitability do they indulge! In such lives the veriest trifling acts are accompanied by a perfect furore of emotions. Blazing eyes, flushed face, high-keyed volubility, eager restlessness, mark the catching of the street-car or the ordering of a glass of soda—energy fairly "slopping out," and producing little but froth and noise. The same force wisely directed toward constructive reality would turn these emotional spendthrifts into the very salt of the earth. Such useless waste of energy could wash dishes, and make dresses, and write books, and teach kindergarten, and speed the typewriter, with a vengeance, were the useless force transferred to practical ends.

We are too prone to begin our improvements at the top. We should begin clear thinking at the bottom. It should be associated with our daily doing. We shall not succeed so well by an effort to reform the process of thought itself, as by the lucid association of thought with act. There is no act too trivial to be preceded by, or associated with, clear thinking, certainly not until the possibility of error and haziness be eliminated from that act, and the automatic produce a perfect substitute. The all-saving habit of clearing our thoughts from error is possible only when we begin with the practical facts associated with our daily doing. The mother who does not acquaint herself with the simple elements of the chemistry of foods and of cooking, is sowing

the seeds of future digestive weaknesses in the bodies of her children, while she herself is blindly "improving her mind," preparing papers on the Abstractions of Kant, or attempting to pen rhapsodies upon Grieg's concertos. She is shutting her eyes to the presence of damaging error, and substituting sentimental fancy for solid facts. The clerk who, day after day, ignorantly handles goods, knowing not their material, their origin, their comparative values; who, touching humanity hourly, is learning nothing of the character, the tendencies, the courtesies, the weaknesses of human nature, passively dreaming the while of the Saturday nights at the theatre and the Sundays of coveted idleness, is a thief. He is robbing himself of breadth, and the basis of progress, closing his eyes to a world of attractive and practical interests; he is robbing not only himself, but his employer and his patrons, through his failure to enlarge reality. The servant who treats all her pots and pans and kettles without discrimination, who knows not copper nor aluminum, nor cast-iron, nor enamel, to whom china and ironstone alike are "dishes," and who scrubs and rubs the hours out, thoughtless and non-thinking, is truly a servile servant, and will so remain.

The failure to apply clear thinking, the failure to demand an understanding, the failure to concentrate upon and master the elements of daily contact, constitute the swaying, uncertain foundation of many a neurotic's mind, and such was the mind of "The Girl

Who Got Rattled." Left alone for a short time through the necessity of an accident, with the possibility of an attack from a band of Indians, she was given a loaded revolver and instructed, if the emergency came, to use the first five chambers for defence and if not rescued, the last one for herself. The Indians did come, but upon hearing a shot, rapidly departed. The girl was dead—the girl who knew not the stability of daily conscious association with reality. She had used the first shot, instead of the last, for herself! With a certainty which is mathematically relentless, the mind which is daily and hourly mixing fantasy with fact, will face with practical helplessness the sudden demands of emergency—those heartless happenings which, sooner or later, enter all lives. Habitual uncertainty and impracticability of thought leave one helpless in the face of unexpected demands which force reason to wrestle with facts, unaided by the reserve of experience. But reason so reinforced is capable of fearlessly facing the unexpected and the inevitable with clearness of perception, which makes possible the practically automatic use of every opportunity for successful solution.

Through the habit of familiarising oneself with the materials of his trade, with the wares of his business, with the elements of his profession or art; of steadfastly refusing to dream when he can know, to imagine when he can realise, to conjecture when he can ascertain, can be developed a certainty of reality

which will rescue many of the nervous now drifting on the wings of fancy and imagination, the puppets of the elfish children of emotion.

When one has attained the ability to select thought, and developed the power of ignoring the undesirable idea, has eliminated the error of prejudice and can clearly distinguish the real from the false, the fixed ideas so domineering in the life of the neurotic, are impossible. The hurtful leadership of ignorant or erroneous ideas, of peculiarities and niceties of diet and habits of dress, and general crankiness, will reform spontaneously in the face of the real; for truth and reality have magnificent powers of accumulation when made the object of conscious thought. And when the intellect has had some months of exercise in the habits of clear thinking, worry thoughts and fear thoughts, and even milder obsessions will surrender, in the presence of the facts of reality.

Many whose minds have not suffered distortion from the surrender to fantasy have been content with too narrow margins of intelligence, seeing only the visible in its crudity, their contemplation being limited to the disappointments and discriminations of the past. For them it is but a short step from their narrow field of thought to haziness and obscurity. With science popularised and literature prepared in a thousand attractive styles and as many helpful forms, with history written in the beauty of romance, eager to bring the facts of the past to teach us lessons for the present and the future, too many are

content to chatter and gossip, to find fault and complain, to discuss the weather, to talk of gowns, to waste to-day, to narrow life—knowing in part only, comprehending nothing in its fulness, ever willing to let some little occurrence of life obscure the whole.

**Multiplying Interests.**—Few modes of thought so certainly develop the nervous life as that which makes the selection of self-attention and self-centred interests habitual. The suggestions already given will be found most useful in developing that elemental necessity—enlarged and varied interests. Thoughts about self must give way to thoughts above self. Trouble and illness, suffering and sorrow come to all, and few conditions so rivet the thought upon self as those attendant upon misfortune. Self-pity craves the balm of expressed sympathy. Counsel *is* needed, and the sympathy which moves us on to manlier effort, which strengthens patience and casts resolution in a firmer mould, may come through the help of others. But discussion of our troubles should be rigorously restricted to one or two wise, patient counsellors—our physician, our attorney, our minister, as professional helpers, or that one fair-minded friend, either in or out of the family—and then silence. In theory we crave strength and force and charm of personality, but these cannot be until there is strength and force and charm in the stream of thought which we permit to course through the field of consciousness. Self-pitying thoughts can but produce a selfish personality, limited thinking but narrowness, coarse thinking but repulsive-

ness, inaccurate thinking but instability, ignorant thinking but error. To cure oneself of the habit of self-attention, the psychological law of the substitution of the higher thought for the lower, of the better for the meaner, through filling the mind with interests superior to self, must be observed.

Defective mental habits are almost ubiquitous, but the opportunities for mental readjustment are rich and most constant. The mind ever has itself to study, and it becomes largely a matter of seriousness of purpose as to whether we will clarify our thoughts and displace the erroneous, and turn away from self-attention; for with the mind, as with the body, the power of the will to alter habit is ever existent. Direct paths may be as quickly worn as devious ones; we can capitalise our habits and make our methods friendly and peace-producing and strength-giving, rather than hostile and entangling and disintegrating. The habit of self-forgetfulness is as possible as its deformed relative, self-attention. Deliberate thinking and the insistence upon accurate thinking may become as automatic as helter-skelter methods and pell-mell decisions.

In enlisting habit through training, however, we must not be too easily satisfied with the simple automatic. It is well enough that children learn as a matter of course to do thus and so without question. Habits early bred are an immense saving of the power and energy so wasted by those not thus protected, but good habits alone will not avail to protect indefinitely, unless associated with true

knowledge. Curiosity, intelligence and reason all demand *to know,* and so we should understand self, and things, and people, and life's difficulties and inevitables. Reason must have more than habit upon which to develop. The rational man masters life through the power of forethought, even as the emotional man is defeated through the mastery of fear-thought.

It is heartening to realise how large a proportion of life can be anticipated, and met forearmed through that forethought which, ever choosing the best, has eliminated error and confusion, and which has escaped the Slough of selfish Despond. Scientific forethought has indicated in its beneficent provisions for the race what personal forethought may do for the individual. To-day, yellow fever and malaria, smallpox, typhoid and diphtheria—diseases which a few generations ago were desolating and disfiguring humanity—have practically disappeared since scientific forethought has been forced upon the individual by the health authorities. Clearness and breadth and wholesome interest may ward off nervousness, and with accuracy, unselfishness and fairness, hold in check even dread insanity, when such thought methods have been made habitual.

No man reaches that mental independence where he dare disregard the fateful truth that the thoughts which he habitually keeps in the foreground will mysteriously attract thoughts of like kind. Group will be added to group, power to power, weakness to weakness. Mental strength is the price of mental

ease. In the face of the complexities, the demands, the insistencies and the confusions of modern highly wrought life, mental serenity can only come through the formation of habitual thought selection, in which reason presides and insists that all thinking be clear thinking.

## CHAPTER XV

### MOULDING THE EMOTIONS

Physical Help.—In our study of the emotions we saw how deeply rooted in our natures is this ever-attending, changing, moving, pleasure-pain sense; saw how intimately interwoven is feeling, in its ever-varying forms, with all thought; how it foreshadows, accompanies and follows all action—man's most intimate associate. Ever whispering, taunting, begging, threatening, demanding, domineering, tyrannising, exhorting, inspiring, it may be a gentle counsellor, a genial companion, a selfish master, a slave-driving tyrant. The joys of life or the wretchedness of existence rest in the emotions' power over the individual.

The harmful effects of unwholesome physical conditions, toxic states resulting from food errors and insufficient muscular activity, result in acute emotional depression from time to time in the average so-called normal life. Because of these and other physical causes, many pass through long periods of emotional misery; while in the particularly susceptible, a prolonged and intensified autointoxication may result in attacks of genuine melancholia. Our emotions are so closely and intimately a part of us that there are no physical or mental activities which do

not directly or indirectly influence them, even as the feelings cast their spell over all that is thought and done. In the pages devoted to the physical causes of nervousness, much which is pertinent and practical to the helpful modification of the emotions which harm, has been suggested. The healthy body is normally the home of happiness, for depression and pessimism are but mental expressions of illness frequently developing from unhealthy physical conditions; and the first step in remodelling the emotions lies in instituting sane and wholesome habits of physical living, since physical living is the basis of all manifestations of human life. In learning to eat for efficiency, we will eat for growing emotional comfort; and slowly, with a progress which ebbs and flows, but with reasonable certainty, sensations of comfort will begin to creep in to displace the old chronic apprehension, a few minutes of exuberance lighten the old depression, and a bright trickle of confidence flow across the barren fields of despair. As the murky swamp water of inactivity is replaced by the well-spring of health, so, gradually, will the poison-exhausted brain cells, the seat and source of thought and feeling and being, take up new energy from the now wholesome blood; and out of the rational physical life alone may come a miraculous transformation, even as from the Slough of Despond to the Mountains Delectable. The unity of mind and body is rarely so clearly shown as in the quick return of emotional comfort so usual with the restitution of physical health. Thus the double reward

of wholesome feeling and strength of being comes to those who will masterfully direct their bodily welfare into healthful channels.

Thought Help.—As the mind develops and the intellect reaches farther and wider in its search for knowledge, reason seeks the control of life, using for its judgments the material thus provided. The emotions assert their supremacy of priority as man's inherited directing influences, while intellect enters the field of consciousness as a usurper, presuming to oust feelings from their smug power of control. In every human being in which any pretence of development has occurred, consciously or unconsciously the question has been answered as to which should be the fundamental controlling influence in that mind—intellect or feeling. We have already seen that in nervous natures all responses are specially keen, all reactions particularly acute; that herein lies their innate susceptibility to emotional domination. Reason and judgment must be enlisted for their help, must be cultivated at the expense of emotional neglect; and, for the neurotic particularly, in that great formative conflict between thinking and feeling, the latter influences must be systematically discounted —certainly such as are of an unhealthy or unhappy nature. If a successful culmination in the fight for nervous stability is to be attained, the intellect's right to exercise its power of thought selection, its right to keep in the eye of the mind that which is fruitful and beautiful and masterful, must be conserved and protected from Emotion's jealous insist-

ence to ever court and control the interests of Attention. The nervous, particularly, must sternly resent the tendency of feeling to dictate decisions. Judgments based upon any except the best obtainable knowledge are usually false judgments, even in the face of our proud assertion of the fineness and the delicacy and the wisdom of our intuitions. Intuition may be true when a result of the keen perceptions of accurately trained observation, but even intuitive feeling is particularly prone to distort, to add to or take from, the value of decisions.

The habit of cool calculation in all matters sufficiently weighty to deserve being weighed can be slowly developed, even in face of the stronger emotional life, if determination fits worthy desire. Much nervous suffering grows out of distressing emotional complexes, whose presence and insistence and discomfort demand of the mind an explanation, and unless reason resolutely stands guard, these very feelings will suggest *their* reason for discouragement, for repellent dislike or impelling fear; will suggest hate thoughts and dread thoughts having no basis whatever in fact, and yet hounding the life into miserable unhappiness, though they represent nothing more than the mind's unreasoned explanation for the emotional discord which exists. Because of this emotional fog, the mind sees through a glass darkly. In these situations reason must clear away the choking mists, reason must recognise the power of feelings to befog and to besmother with doubt, and to stifle with fear. In such lives as have hon-

oured Reason by bestowing upon it that respect ever due the mind's real Ruler, such harmful complexes can be reasoned out, understood and dispelled through the potency of a developed power of contemplation. When the flash of feeling sweeps upon the stage, asserting its control, it is time to stop and think things over. The mind should be able, on such occasions, to soon replace the emotional marionettes by reasoning flesh and blood. It is within the power of normal intellect, through its ability to select thought material, to displace emotions' irrational, harmful and impulsive thought fancies, by ideas that strengthen, by thoughts chiselled out of fact's granite, and by reasons which have been builded strong in the work-shop of normal experience.

Emotions undermine nervous stability, frequently, through the neglects of simple thoughtlessness. We are apt to be temporarily attracted by the emotional extravagances in the actions and attitudes of the overvivacious. But if we are not later utterly to weary of them, they must possess more than gush, highly-keyed chatter and sentimental gabble—all proper and charming when time and occasion are considered, but more often as useless and wasteful as the ever-running faucet. Such characters are exemplified in many time-killing lives. A little serious thought will protect us from such wasteful habits, and help us replace suds with substance. Clear thinking is an immense help in saving emotional leakage and exhaustion—in clearing up error. Crooked thoughts soon get us out of harmony with

our surroundings, and the emotions accompanying the jangling discord of cross-purposes and misadjustments can only be those of hopes disappointed and confidences wrecked; and desperation or leaden depression or uneasy recklessness will frequently be the penalty of the wrong frontage of erroneous thinking.

**Feeling Help.**—We have referred so frequently to the weaknesses and dangers of emotional supremacy in the nervous life that it will be quite natural for the reader to feel that his reeducation will probably not end until he has rendered himself as emotionless as a clam. But this is not at all the intent of this chapter. As long as we are human we will feel, and feel keenly and constantly. It is not at all a question of not feeling, but it is emphatically a question of right feeling; not an impoverishment of the wonderful emotional life that is urged, but a cultivation and enrichment and a beautifying of the emotional nature, possible as long as life clings to the ideals of development. The hurtful brands of emotions may haunt man as the very shades of Gehenna, may turn all which should be sunshine and gladness and joy into Stygian blackness, may chill the very cockles of the heart; even as wholesome beneficent feelings may open up vistas of Heaven, displace midnight gloom with the golden glint of noonday, and suffuse every interspace of the body with the thrilling eagerness of life. There are emotions to be avoided as a pestilence; there are others to be welcomed and cherished as mother-love. There are

emotions that strain and drain, emotions that maim —emotions more painful, exhausting and depleting than the tire of intense and protracted physical or mental labour. But from these we should turn with gratitude to those that cheer, that strengthen, that inspire, that save. It is the tonic of such emotions, rather than the gentian, quassia or strychnin, which the nervous patient needs. The recognition that hurtful feeling states and emotional habits can slowly, often discouragingly, but truly, be replaced by those that stimulate and give strength and bring joy, stands for saving knowledge to the earnest-minded sufferer.

There are, unfortunately, numbers of emotional topers who have drunk so long and steadily of feeling excess that their veins are saturated with emotional toxins, in whose lives reason is useless, and will has long since been emasculated; and selection and attention have failed under the control of ruthless, irrational feeling life. For such disorganised emotional bondsmen there is practically no hope for self-restoration. They must be placed in the hands of the trained expert, and under his rational disciplinary care be painfully reeducated. Miracles of cure, even in those apparently hopelessly demoralised emotionally, are constantly resulting through such personal specialised skill and attention.

The great majority of the nervous are not wrecks. They are not helpless slaves of feeling, and with the realisation of the damage which their unhealthy emotions are producing in their lives, in the knowledge

that feelings of this type may be replaced by the strength-giving and power-breeding kind, the determination should come to enter training in the art of systematic emotional moulding. In replacing flabby muscles by the strong, energy-producing kind, in choosing food to nourish brain and blood rather than to titillate the palate, and in demanding of the mind the thought selection which leads to mental clearness and power, the difficult is consistently being chosen in the face of the pleadings of indolence and momentary comfort. Even as the accomplishment of all developmental ideals demands effort—effort of resolution, effort of attention, efforts of denial—so the displacing of hurtful, weakening emotions, by helpful, strengthening ones, can only be successfully accomplished through a persistence and an insistence which stands for effort oft repeated—repeated in the face of defeat, repeated until it has become habitual, repeated until we have become inured to its fag.

The trouble usually starts in childhood. During those years of normal emotional dominance, indulgent and weak parents, themselves probably uncontrolled, fail utterly in demanding of their children wholesome, developing, emotional mastery. The ungoverned passions of children break out unrestrained, in storms of anger, fits of temper. Tempestuous demands are weakly granted by parents to avoid a "scene," to save the unpleasantness of the half-hour devoted to respect-producing parental control. In many homes the children's emotions are allowed to run rampant, with no check until the ridicule

of school life modifies, while rarely remedying, the weakness. So the weeds in the emotional garden have frequently been allowed to choke flower and fruit-producing growth. The serious business of adulthood is entered upon with a crop of perverse mental habits, the kind which grow spontaneously out of the narrow, often ugly interests of self, with little or no ability to successfully substitute for these the joyous and inspiring ones. It is true that, until we learn unselfish thoughts, until we do unselfish deeds, crude, primitive, selfish feelings will grip strong the life which has neglected their uprooting. Still, unless emotional insanity has robbed life of the capacity for wholesome feeling, it is possible to substitute the worthy for the harmful, the heartening for the corroding, the joyous for the sad. Emotions may be cultivated even as muscle and appetite, and through the help of thought selection the art of rejoicing may come, even on the heels of much which we call trouble.

We slip and fall physically, or mentally, or morally, or socially, or financially, and "Woe is me!" is Emotion's temptation. But when one has learned the joy-sense through daily substitution of expressions of enjoyment for those of complaint, through the self-forgetting smile, even though the smiling face adorns an aching head, through the courageous saying of the joy-words, though things are so tangled that we have to pause to find a single bright thread in the snarl; yet, blessed with such training, we pick ourselves up, and with a smile that may have nothing

behind it but resolution, go on mastering the art of rejoicing, elevating our emotions from those of the weakling to those of the ruler.

Just as truly as the mind may learn to clear the haze surrounding simple daily acts, with equal certainty those darker mists of depression which so insistently drift over our work to distort it into worry may be cleared away by the sunlight of courage; much which is called sodden sadness may be transformed into the wholesomely serious; while morbid moroseness may be displaced by the ardent earnestness which represents the confidence and power of emotional health. Good emotions can be systematically exercised, for with wholesome thought life most situations present some elements from which a silver lining may be made. The mind is indolent, miserably narrowed, hopelessly hardened or deeply corrupted which is utterly unable to find some ray of brightness in the very losses which rob the present of the reward of past well-doing, in the disappointments which shut out some cherished possibilities of the future, or even in those cruelly sad hours when our own flesh and blood leave us to return no more.

But it is not in the great emergencies of life that our emotions are to be trained. The cheerful face and glad word and the unruffled responses at the breakfast table, the cheer that goes into the work-a-day life and faces its hourly disappointments, the hope and courage which rob constantly recurring irritations of their sting, and which ever meet impatient, unreasonable, disappointing human nature

without the surrender of good-feeling, combine to accumulate power for all demands. Emotional readjustment is gradually effected through the patient insistence upon not only the cheering smile for the benefit of others, but upon the kindly, hopeful feeling pervading our relations to our work and to our fellow-workers.

There is no form of mental or physical activity which develops its full strength without frequent repetition, and the unworthy, hurtful emotions can gradually be blunted and their insistence weakened through a resolute determination to refuse them their wonted expression. In fact, it is the giving way to emotions that furnishes their strength. Unfortunately, this law works as efficiently to weaken the good as the bad affections, and dwarfing of the higher emotions is a common occurrence in the lives of men and women enjoying the best advantages of cultural life. Two or three times a week they hear the ideals of living expressed with fervour, and eloquent appeals are made to their magnanimity, their generosity, their sympathy, their duty to their neighbour; and yet the good impulsions thus started soon shatter and fade when not given expression in action. The most appealing sermons, stimulating addresses, heart-touching lectures, are perfunctorily discussed as to their form and esthetic qualities, or at best stimulate an exchange of a few well-chosen sentences of approval. But there is no increase in the donation of dollars to help enlighten benighted humanity; no time is devoted to a personal investi-

gation of wrong conditions; no sacrifice of time or comfort follows those eloquent promptings—promptings which should have aroused deep, earnest, sincere feelings, leading on to deeds of kind. Such neglect following emotional inspiration results in the inevitable atrophy of good impulses, even as the following of them leads to greatness and beauty and power of feeling.

In displacing irritability—that nagging, wasteful, emotional temptation which may become an inveterate feeling-habit—the realisation must be brought forcibly home that it is not the perversity of things or people, it is not the clutter or uproar about us, it is not misfortunes, little or great, not physical ills or pains, that create our emotional weather. We are our own weather bureau, our own cyclone centre, our own producer of thunder-storms and lightning-crashes; the frosts and fogs and chills of life are of our own making; and life's sunshine, and balmy, genial, refreshing days are made in our own hearts. There is an attitude which simple and learned, prince and pauper can maintain in life's relations, expressed in the paraphrase of the court oath: 'Keep the peace, the whole peace, and nothing but the peace.' For him whose relations are based upon this ideal, life will ultimately be freed of the fret and fume and worry of the commonplace. It is remarkable what success attends decisive efforts to eliminate even the strong impulse and fiercer temper of emotional sprees. Many develop from impatient, hot-headed, explosive youth into even-balanced, emo-

tion-mastered maturity through that determination which puts irritability under foot, which counts twenty backwards, repeats the warning verse or whistles a tune, before giving expression to the threatened anger-storm.

For the fearful, and that includes a multitude of the nervous, the fight is more difficult. Fear is insidious; it injects itself into many of life's relations and affairs in many forms. It grips the sensitive with an impelling force, and follows its victim like a haunting shadow, even reaching its clutching claws into the quiet of slumber, peopling the dark and lonely hours with the horrible visages of a distraught imagination; reaching even across the great gulf and freezing the soul as it anticipates the hereafter. Reason could rid such lives of a great mass of this hurting fear if emotions would only respond to reason. Reason's insistence is true when it reveals fear as a beneficent, as a useful, saving influence; when it asserts that fear helpfully exists only for that which is definite, for that which is certainly, obviously and unquestioningly threatening; and that the fear of the indefinite is now, and forever shall be, a curse to life. Ninety-nine per cent. of the neurotic's fear is for that which may never be, for the intangible, that which cannot be expressed, or accepted by reason.

But if the neurotic cannot accept this rational help, this help which makes the man of reason courageous while the child of feeling trembles and quakes and quails, hope exists for him in the wholesome emotion of faith. Faith can displace the thousand

and one anticipatory dreads and embryonic fears with confidence and hope; faith can rob the most extreme terror of its power to shrivel and paralyse. Faith has carried youth and maiden into the Arena—faith which closed their eyes to the horrible realities of a martyr's death and looked across the dark river to the martyr's victory; faith could calmly caress the burning faggots, and rise serene and supreme above the agony of the stake, chanting a hymn of love. Unmoved in the presence of utter loneliness and neglect, faith has entered the hearts and minds and bodies of frail women and weakened men, and led them fearlessly through years of self-forgetfulness and self-denial, captains indeed of their fate.

Fear unrestrained overcomes wholesome emotions, and fills life with a jangle of false alarms. Many reality-dodging neurotics find—in their poorly-balanced emotions—worry-thoughts and fear-thoughts, which they interpret as evidences of impending insanity. Day after day, month after month, they plan most effectively to go insane, doing everything that autosuggestion and the demoralisation of fear can do, to disorganise mental stability. In many of the selfish, fear has so usurped the emotional stage as to have quite eliminated love and courage from the scene. The love-life, like the faith-life, can rob fear of its power to blight. And courage, the courage which reason has taught to accept the inevitable, to face the certainty of accident, loss, and pain, makes prisoner of Fear and holds him helplessly bound, for Fear has its captors all double-strong.

The normal mind may thus rid itself of its deadly, sedition-breeding traitors. Faith and love and courage are sentiments before which Fear and its motley tribe cower and slink away.

For that other great army of sufferers, the nervously depressed, the fight is also serious, and long and difficult. A few of this type are miserable through choice. For them there is a "joy in melancholy." There are for them hidden delights in their sombre moods, as classically expressed by Burton three centuries ago:

> "All my joys to these are folly,
> Naught so sweet as melancholy."

But few, even of those who indulge constantly in these unwholesome moods, will be so frank as Burton. From them arises much of the world's plaints and wails. Many scholastically intelligent and otherwise well-bred indulge as a matter of course in periodic surrender to "the blues." Others live upon an emotional see-saw; it is the "blues" one day or one week, and the "glads" for an equal time; or the alternation may be more rapid, and it is difficult for their friends to know from hour to hour in which mood they will be found. Thus the depressed are all robbing life, their lives and others'.

But many, through inherited tendencies, through lack of whole some environmental advantages in childhood, through the deadening influence of later intoxications, are marked as with the brand of Cain. The sick in moods are sources of infection no less

real than those suffering from tuberculosis. But while many surrender and accept their variously expressed depressions without protest, others fight earnestly and persistently to rise above their murky moods and replace them with love of duty, love of truth, love of nature, love of humanity—with ethical, esthetic and religious motives. They realise that the mood is not omnipotent, that there is a power of mood-mastery. They know that the mood is movable; that it may be temporarily displaced by a laugh, a joke, a strain of music, the voice of a child. Even the repression of mood expression helps. A "do-or-die" determination that it will not show, that the closest friend will not know of its presence, the courageous assumption of cheer will gradually rob depression of its power. But this is a gluttonous monster, feeding upon many gentle and otherwise wholesome lives, a monster which requires the combined power of health of body, clearness of thought, strength of faith and resolution of spirit, to kill.

**Will Help.**—And finally, the mind's great working power, the will, can be relied upon to do much in emotional remodelling. Surrender to feelings finds excuse in our little pains, our headaches, backaches or tired feet, in our colds and hours of general discomfort. From these and similar sources wells up the great chorus of "I don't feel able"—for duty—seldom unable for diverting amusement or pleasure. Overprotection from pain has resulted in popularising the fear-of-pain idea, till many moderns are fit only for conservatory growth. Our self-coddled and

professionally-protected bodies are taught to shrink from and avoid pain as disaster. With all the high refinements of modern comfort, we have become oversensitive, shivering in every breeze, wrapping, overdressing and living in overheated rooms, because comforts soon become unreasonable, almost insatiable in their demands; and with a pill for every pain and a drug for every discomfort, we make ourselves physical cowards. Yet how quickly little aches and moderate discomforts can be put under foot! Ten days of enthusiastic "roughing it" changes the man or woman, who is still able to make his own red blood, from a shivering whiner to one who can roll up in his blanket and waterproof, and sleep peacefully through rain or snow. The physician soon learns that most complaints of suffering come from patients with little ills; that he who is gravely sick, he who is in the grasp of deep-seated or fatal illness, knows not the plaints of my lady with the headache. With will at our backs, duty looms large, indulgence retreats; and until we know that the sickness is serious, we are on duty, ill or well. Much more damage to modern health results from underwork, than is produced by the injury which comes from working when ill.

In the development of will-strength, ungoverned emotions are its natural antagonists. With growing will-power, abnormal emotional expression is subject to increasing control. Strength of will may be spoken of in terms of emotional mastery. He whose passions are still rampant, whose periodic outbreaks

make his company a menace, though wilful as Nero, is truly a volitional weakling. With every successful effort in the control of emotional expression, there is a lessening of the emotional force. As soon as the child realises that none of his desires are gratified until emotional self-control is manifest; that his crying and screaming and foot-stamping and head-bumping expressions of impatience and anger are rewarded only by a persistent neglect of these passionately expressed demands; and that nothing but merited punishment is secured by such actions, the foundation of his self-control is laid. If, in addition, evidences of kindly feeling and courtesy are required before his requests are honoured, and if such methods are consistently employed, early emotional poise will result.

As the years slip by, our treatment of our emotions decides whether they will weaken or intensify. Properly governed, they become obedient, faithful servants of the mind; properly trained, they keep life's cup teeming with happiness—for habitual right-feeling becomes as possible through emotional moulding, as clear-thinking through mental readjustment. Again the great law of substitution is helpful, and self-mastery can replace the most diverse forms of emotional outbreaks. The secret of this mastery is found in a resolute stepping away from self the second the emotional clutch is felt. There is always something in the face or action of our irritator, of him who is provoking or opposing, in the one we fear or whose presence oppresses, some need,

or weakness, or peculiarity of his to which we can for the moment attend. His emotional control or lack thereof, the strength or weakness of his mouth, the portent of his motile pupils, the workings of his fingers, the tension of his frame, the inflection of his words—any of these may be made temporary objects of interest, momentarily holding the thought, until the emotion, which is so intent upon gripping and mastering, finds itself checked, while the more deliberate will lays hold. We have stepped outside of self for the moment; we can now return and find our house in order.

It all stands for strife, for strife with self. That which would detain us prisoners—knowing increasing poverty of joy-thought and meagreness of love-thought—combats with the self which would courageously face the problem of displacing primal selfishness, with world-including, soul-developing externalisation. Enduring enjoyment through the lengthening years of life must be earned; it comes only through that consistency of effort which remoulds our perverse and damaging emotions into those capable of bringing self-perpetuating joy.

## CHAPTER XVI

### WILLING WILLS

Necessity for Will Reeducation.—As we look out upon our neighbours, and in upon ourselves, we realise that quite a bit of life is awry. Errors in living and failures in life are common sights. Ignorance explains much of this. So many do not know. Indifference is a defect which allows some characters to leak and waste; but in these days of ever-widening knowledge, indolence, indecision and defective self-control are far more frequently the cause of the neurotic's plight. Such defects are only possible in the absence of will, the only force that can utilise wisdom, and can hold muscle and mind true, and thus make right living possible. Reason chooses the way for the hour, for the day—the great way of life. The choice of wisdom may be unquestioned, its selection one which offers a successful culmination of plans, or promises a happy destination; but culmination or destination can never be reached unless active will compels the expression of sustained effort. Were such will universal, the many would long since have realised all of man's good purposes; for unique indeed is the life which has not planned better than it has executed. Action is born in will. Idea suggests, impulse urges, but action is the result of the

will's yea or nay; and in the final reckoning, as in daily experience, a man is only what he does. His thoughts may represent perfect prodigies of portent, his ideas fairly scintillate the brilliancy of genius, emotions never so fine may course through his veins and set every force of his being in eager, waiting expectancy; but without expression in word, in page, in deed of daring, in touch of love, his value is as nothing—it all stands for useless waste.

As we reach into life's cornucopia, be it ne'er so overflowing, and note its gifts for us, we are prone to complain of the burdens they bring. As we open each little package of a day, we rarely find one which does not contain duty, does not disclose trouble, or disappointment, or loss or hard endeavour. We save and accumulate, and a night's frost destroys our golden crop; the heavens withhold their accustomed rains, and half the year's increase fails to mature; unexpected illness, the rascality of a trusted friend, and our margin of saving is wiped away. We under-exercise, and slowly illness and weakness creep upon us; we overindulge, and sudden sickness, or ultimately, certain incapacity awaits us. To the thoughtless, life's gifts have more of the hard than the pleasant; but to the thoughtful, the understanding will certainly come that all this weight and burden but indicate that life is deliberately planned to develop wills. An active, willing will is the essential basis of character. He who takes what is proffered him from hour to hour from life's great treasury, facing the situation, meeting the need, accepting the

challenge, turning not backward, delaying not, refusing not, will inevitably attain a superb independence over what the whimpering weakling names "misfortune." Life's so-called ills but challenge our wills.

> "To-morrow the hot furnace flame
> Will search the heart and try the frame,
> And stamp with honour or with shame
> These vessels made of clay."

In the shame of weakness and in the acceptance of unworthy defeat, thousands lose the good of life, living multiplying years of needless nervous wretchedness because of weak wills, sometimes lost wills. Common animal indulgence and slavery to habits of self-gratification rob character of the virtues which are the earnest of victory, sap decisions of all promise of fulfilment, and so rot the fibre of character as to sink their victims out of the category of manhood.

With each year of life the individual becomes more completely a being of habits, some of which are the mere compilation of passive choice, unproductive and often detrimental, the offspring of the narrowest of self-interests. Such habits, lacking in the elements of true virility—makeshift, compromising expedients—simply pile the burdens of existence ahead. The habits that construct and develop, which certainly produce power, which truly rob the days of the waste of weakly repeated effort, are those formed by an active will, the result of deliberate choice of that which at the time stands for denial. A few such

habits entering into life prove productive sources of energy—thereafter life is a positive force.

The will-less and weak-willed are less common among the nervous than the wilful. From the standpoint of nervous reeducation, every wilful patient is a hopeful risk. Wilfulness is a force, wilfulness is a manifestation of will power—will power in an active, assertive form, only misdirected. Let the wilful train his mind and heart toward a higher good; let him see and feel the better duty, and this selfish manifestation of volitional power will find unselfish expression, self-seeking determinations will attempt that which is better than self, and from mere domineering wilfulness will develop the royal personality —through wills willing the right.

**Willing Effort.**—Six thousand miles is saved each vessel sailing from New York to San Francisco by the Panama Canal, and weeks of time and a thousand tons of coal—an economy of dollars and effort which, when multiplied by all the sailings of a century, will represent the wealth of an empire. The Panama Canal is a monument to effort—one of the modern wonders of the world—constructed through the indomitable perseverance of Anglo-Saxon wills. The idea of such a passage came into the minds of most active schoolboys in their study of geography. The engineering problems were great, but the Panama Canal will ever stand as a superb example of the overcoming of difficulty piled upon difficulty. Intelligence directed effort, and the intensive effort of unflinching wills changed a pest-hole of disease into the

healthiest zone in the western continent; assembled and coordinated a motley multitude of labourers into a virile, aggressive, resourceful, resistless army. The tropical sun, the tropical torrents, the world-old solidity and repose of earth and stone, gave way to man's will; and ocean reached out to meet ocean, and distance was bisected. Active will works with decision always toward an object, and action will ever stand for the whole and final expression of man.

Indolence, failure and despair are eloquent in their counsel of surrender. Apathy, neglect, weakening passivity, disintegration of physical, mental and moral strength set in when effort fails. In these "degenerate times," neglect of physical effort is the temptation of all mental workers. The attendant weariness of work of mind is unwisely accepted as an equivalent of fatigue of muscle; the fundamental chemical laws of physical well-being are violated; and weariness begets weariness. Any plea which would intimate that man should return to the life of mere mechanical effort would but belie the race's progress, and designate the mental as inferior to the physical; but that great chorus of discord welling forth from the multitudes of those condemned to days or lives of nervous pain and unrest, is but an appeal for guided wills that can choose, and consistently and persistently devote those few weekly hours to the determined physical effort which is the price of generations of sustained health. To-day this failure to properly use our bodies, that we may know physical and nervous health, is being laid with in-

creasing emphasis at the door of unwilling wills. Few, when they feel the grip of nervous restlessness or the chill of nervous depression, but promptly decide on some modification of their physical life which they believe will be helpful; fewer of these few still have the will force to prolong their wise resolutions sufficiently to attain lasting benefit. The will's most beneficent action rests in its ability to manacle attention to the object of its rational choice.

Feeling is coy—in the nervously ill she is frightful. She is persistent in her efforts to woo or stampede attention from will's control, and effort of attention is but another expression for will. In the independent, unswerving direction of thought, resides much of that immense power for serene supremacy, attained by the exceptional individual who transmutes joy and gladness, and sorrow and sadness into resistless character. Through will discipline, man's vaunted supremacy of mind over body is realised.

It is only through our willingness to put forth effort that the body may know that judicious hardening which will free the nervous system from its slavery to feeling, from its love of incapacitating comforts. Only thus may we acquire a tolerance to changes in the weather, to summer's heat or winter's cold, a tolerance to those scores of discomforts which must be met and faced and assimilated before our declaration of independence to nervous tyranny can be proclaimed. So, many of the nervously weak have obtained their unhappy distinction through systematic avoidance of effort. Many such develop an

ingenuity in the avoidance of temporary discomforts quite sufficient to accomplish a serious reformation.

Many of the nervous will realise their need for will-strengthening, will see in their habits a growing desire to avoid voluntary effort, will recognise an increasing tendency to shirk and shrink from that which suggests fatigue. Many consider themselves quite unable for aggressive, active effort, until they have reluctantly and gently initiated the day with a series of comfort-breeding concessions. For these, and for all who find their wills lacking in punch, much will be accomplished in the restitution of willing wills through a self-discipline which insists upon starting the day right. Perchance at first but a simple, aggressive act of will domination can be enforced. The least that should satisfy is a resolute assault upon the middle of the floor before the clock has finished striking the appointed hour, a brave handful of cold water dashed over unwilling neck and chest, with a minute's vigorous rubbing of the cold surface into glowing gratitude, then two or three lungfuls of the freshest and coldest air obtainable, and a half-minute of sharp—yes, vicious—stationary running. He of developed will in a developed body will not be satisfied with less than a cold-tub start, followed by ten or fifteen minutes' intensive, fatigue-producing physical exercise—in all cases, the morning start which leaves one panting and fatigued. Difficult at first, "senselessly exhausting," the self-petted one

will exclaim, but a habit which, persevered in, develops a margin of will-strength, assuring as the years multiply, an invaluable reserve. When one has resolutely, conscientiously and consistently put into the first fifteen or twenty minutes of the day, through his own volition, by his own choice, a concentration of effort more intense than will be demanded of him during a like period by any of his daily duties, he enters the day with the heartening sense that the hardest is past, that he has voluntarily, for health of body's sake and strength of will's sake, demanded of himself more than others will require of him. Not only does this simple rule rob the day of much of the dread of the hard things which are coming, but it is one of the best remedies for procrastination, for the habit of pushing the unpleasant or the disagreeable ahead; and it makes for the development of genuine will power of high quality.

If the business of will repair is a seriously needed one, an additional help to the right starting of the day will be secured through the habit of daily selection of some short task, some duty not entirely agreeable, some sacrifice demanding effort, some act of thoughtfulness requiring denial, setting aside a brief period of study, the reading of a page or a chapter, the memorising of a few lines, the fifteen minutes at the dictionary or encyclopedia—some activity not demanded by our regular duties, which we resolve to accomplish before retiring. Some of the world's most efficient workers ascribe their success to this

daily habit of designating a certain stint of work, which they accomplish, even though it means the "wee, sma' hours."

Willing Decision.—The day-dreamer is usually will-less. The character in which wishing to any extent displaces willing courts the loss of its volitional back-bone. Wishing must be transformed into willing, dreaming into doing, before that force can be attained which makes vigorous, productive, or even self-sustaining manhood possible. But need of wills is not at all limited to the masculine gender. Dreamy, dreary indolence, and will-less, sentimental wish-weakness are common demoralisers of womanhood—and nervousness grows apace in such an atmosphere. Feeling-fog, and dismal anticipations, and cloudiness of purpose, which clutter the mind, may be cleared away through earnest will activity. The will which demands a prompt doing of the duty which is always at hand, which resolutely refuses to listen to the questionings and doubts and uncertainties of inaccurate feeling-suggestion, is the kind of will which, when attained, proves the needed saving force for many a neurotic who has become mired by the habitual acceptance of the decisions of inertia.

Many, who have for years been comfortably clear thinkers, like others who have never trained themselves into logical habits of reasoning, when they become toxic and their nerves go wrong, find difficulty in reaching decisions. There is a distinct difference between the act of decision of effort—meaning the one in which choice is directed along the line of great-

est resistance—and that miserable indecision which fairly burns up the strength of resolve and principle, through the often hopeless effort to reach a conclusion which will satisfy the doubting, questioning, fearing mind. Weakened wills ever find energy loss through their inability to decide, for will is the mind's basis of decision, as well as of execution; and as has been repeatedly asserted in foregoing chapters, it is will, not feeling, that must control; duty, not desire, that must lead; purpose and principle, and not pleasure, that must dominate. When indecision has become at all rampant, will power may be rapidly quickened through a few weeks of systematic choosing of the disagreeable. To be able to deliberately select the uncomfortable when comforts are wooing, to assert the personal superiority to nagging conditions and perverse things, go far toward clearing the mind of the smudge of indecision. Impatience, irritability, even fierce-burning anger, are the reactions of many to even small and immaterial inconveniences. The ability to greet these minor interferences with asserted serenity, with even a bit of welcome, proves quite disconcerting to not only the inconvenience itself, but to its attending impatience. How spontaneously do we doff our hats of respect, how involuntarily pay homage to the unknown knight or lady who, for courtesy's sake, for gentility's sake, for gentleness' sake, accepts personal inconvenience with the unassuming consciousness of *noblesse oblige.*

The weakness of indecision is not easily overcome. Until clear thinking can develop convincing judg-

ments, the simplest rule to be adopted in combating this conscienceless thief of our energies is found in the resolute decision to decide—to decide even with the risk of error, the risk of starting upon the wrong road. With the defect of indecision, with its depreciation of strength and discounting of character, the will to decide at any hazard must be forced. One can rarely go far wrong without discovering his error, though he may waver indefinitely between this and that with the tedium of the ever-swinging pendulum, knowing only the restlessness and waste and loss of uncertainty, and never the rest of decision. Indecision always stands for effort, decision for repose. The wrong decision, when found to be wrong, suggests an opposite course as the right one; but having decided wrong, the right solution is ever closer than when we hopelessly turn hither and yon, hither and yon, in the weak vacillation of indecision. There is a close relation between conditions of painful indecision and the nervous tension of chronic, irritating autointoxication.

In cultivating the ability to will prompt and abiding decisions, a return to simplicity is frequently essential for the nervously-disturbed mind. Much confusion and inability to reason conclusively grows out of the richly-varied choice of interests now presented to all. Many are trying to cover too much ground, trying to be aggressively progressive, stretching their energy over so broad a surface that their attention has become dangerously thin, and sooner or later indecision grips the mind. The decision ad-

hered to, to do one thing well, even a simple thing, forms a nucleus which, while small, can be rolled as the snowball into immense proportions; for, as snow to snow, so will good adhere to good. Unfortunately, those who have serious will defects become helpless, as far as any prospect of self-discipline is concerned. Their spasmodic efforts at mastery are doomed to defeat by the weakness inherent in the very mind that conceives them. Particularly is this true in those whose defective habits have caused indulgence in drink or drugs, or prolonged damage from physical or mental toxins. For these, discipline from without must be used during weeks or months, which, with appropriate physical training and restoration, and the introduction of some worthy motive into life, constitute the only principles upon which lasting salvation from the weaknesses of self may be achieved. Many psychasthenics, neurasthenics and hysterics are sadly defective in will, and should surrender absolutely to the mind that knows, to the will which can guide, to the character which can inspire, until atrophied will has been restored. There are nervous weaklings for whom health of mind or body is impossible unless compelled from without.

**Willing Control.**—The seriousness and helplessness of the condition of many of the nervous is due to the unfortunate fact that exhaustion of nervous energy usually reduces will power; consequently, the very motive force which is essential to rapid recovery is lacking. Again, surrender to the temporary

control of one who has mastered the art of nervous reeducation offers the quickest solution of the problem. We have already seen that will's first battles are with its hereditary enemies, indolence, fear, anger, hate and selfish wilfulness; therefore, though volition's most consistent slogan should be "I will," it must also learn the saving power of the insistent "No." All strife is a combination of attack and defence. Most successful battles are won through energetic and forceful aggressiveness, but defence is frequently as essential as offence; and in reply to the insistent demands of inclination, which would keep us ever lagging behind the leadership of our ideals, inhibition, with the power to resist, to say "No" and again "No," must be developed. Man faces a thousand practical situations in which the hard, the cold, sometimes the bitter "No" must be said. Again, the immense cumulative power of daily small acts in producing habits which become ultimately storm-proof, is in evidence. A few minutes' introspection will reveal to all unworthy tendencies which should be denied. The teacher, the employer, the parent, may resist the temptation to impatient response to the "dumb-fool question." The employee, the servant, the less fortunate neighbour, may put into daily operation the determination to withhold the damaging, critical comment. All youth will add immeasurably to ease and productiveness of living through a resolute negation of the importunities of anger to vivid and emphatic expression. Learning the opportune use of the powerful little word "No,"

when the meaner qualities of self attempt to dictate action, will develop a power of control sufficient to save many from future nervous failure.

Bad nervous habits form rapidly in the face of will surrender. They constantly add to the load which the nervous of all types carry, and in the breaking of such habits much can be done to strengthen the armour of resistance. Just as mind and body have no greater conserver of their forces, no means of multiplying their strength equal to will-formed habits, so the subject of automatic poor habits, acquired through the indolence of passive will action, is constantly wasting will force in an effortful doing of life's ordinary duties—actions which should long since have become spontaneous. The poor workman, an unfitted square peg, plodding and industrious but inaccurate, attempting that which he has not the training or capacity to accomplish, the careless and negligent, the thoughtless and unobservant, all blunder along through life, objects of criticism and rebuke, sarcasm and ridicule. Growing resentful, irritable, remorseful, they leak energy through fear of having poorly done, through impatience at the criticism and condemnation of their work; they are wretched through their mistaken feeling of injustice in the lack of an unearned recognition.

Along few lines do the nervous need a widening of their margins more than in their resistance to lesser pains and discomforts. The temptation to overprotection of self is almost inherent in the nervous tem-

perament, and with the nervously diseased an infinite amount of waste force is directed toward the avoidance of pain. A willing will is an absolute necessity in developing that control which puts the nervous beyond the domination and ultimate damnation of drugs and stimulants. It does require more than the average will to resolutely turn from discomfort to duty, from pain to practical effort, yet this is a saving power which, when acquired, should forever settle in the life of the nervous the question of "doping" or doing. The margin of resistance can profitably be pushed beyond the suggestive power of the average headache, the periodic discomfort, or the "no 'count" feeling. A moderate amount of pain should be no enemy to the will; the average will should possess the power to convert many minor ills into strengthening allies; the mind finds daily opportunities for willing control in the constant reappearance of inclination, while the surrender to indulgence through the simple insistence of inclination stands for a weakness which can only lead on to disaster, large or small. Yet there is no reason why indulgence should not be chosen on occasion, when it does not interfere with higher demands; but for him who would own himself and not be controlled by any of his unworthy servants, such indulgence should be the result of a deliberate choice, and never of drifting decision.

One of the higher developments in the volitional life rarely considered by the thoughtless, and usually actively avoided by the weak of will, is that rare

power of transforming dislikes into likes. Each developed dislike may prove a centre for softening of character; while each dislike transformed into a like is an added nucleus, about which to accumulate character strength.

Fear enshrouds some lives with the sinister and threatening. Situations occur from which the majority turn and flee, or slink away; and in attaining that will which stamps its owner as one of superior fibre, such apparitions will be faced. Sad is the life which has dragged through agonised years of misery, avoiding some frightfulness which has never come; but in resolutely facing this demoralising phantom, the physical hurt or the temporary shame is found less discounting to nervous integrity than the prolonged surrender to the cowardice of fear. Such assertion arouses the self that saves. There is one healing power of the will, a veritable elixir of life, that power which fixes its mind on the best, which wills health, and works for health. Such power can never be developed until the ability to will control, and maintain it, has been secured.

For the tense, the power of relaxation can only come through willed self-forgetfulness. The simple ability to give up for the five-minute period all thought of strife, to lie upon the couch inert, can be gradually developed into the power of potent relaxation. In tension there is constant leakage, a leakage which ultimately lessens will power; while in rational relaxation there is a conservation of strength which results in a beneficent cycle—force is added to will,

and force of will increases the power of relaxation. In such power we discern the solution of the problem of sleeplessness.

Food self-poisoning usually forms the background for the irritating physical stimulation which repels sleep, and a food-exercise readjustment is essential to cure. Only less common is the mental irritant—the restless whip of Worry—defying the call of physical rest, and relaxation of mind. But a few nights of toxic-worry-sleeplessness, and the nervously susceptible is impressed with the certainty of his insomnia. Now is the stage fully set for the growing months of poor sleep, when the labours of the day are only less exhausting than the hopeless strivings of the night. Thus is formed the habit, which can only multiply the sleepless hours, the habit of adjusting the plans and activities of the day to the single end—that sleep thereby may be assured. But the very intensity of effort to secure sleep creates a mental tension which is sleep's greatest enemy. The sufferer is now ready for a further step in his nervous demoralisation—the resort to the sleep potion. There is no drug, sufficiently powerful to produce artificial sleep, which is not a poison to the sensitive brain protoplasm. In times of extreme stress or illness, the physician may wisely prescribe a sleep-mixture as a temporary emergency measure. Nevertheless, for the nervous, each night of drug-sleep is a stride deeper into the mire of helplessness. On the other hand, by wise eating, potent muscular fatigue, worry-shunning thought-selection and right-

eously attained relaxation, the normal sleep which "knits up the ravel'd sleeve of care" may be attained by all not organically damaged.

The thoughtful reader has long since divined the essential and fundamental truth that nervous cure is self-cure. The specialist does not give a magic potion which acts as the fabled Fountain of Youth; there is no magnetic touch to recall force of nerve or stability of thought wasted through excess or neglect; the mental healer knows no mystic word which is a talisman to draw from the depths of space miraculous forces to rejuvenate the jaded. Powder and pill are usually but makeshifts, more or less weakly or harmfully modifying symptoms only. Elaborate courses of treatment which demand of the patient no expenditure of creative effort, and prolonged, diversion-seeking trips offer nothing but the superficial cure of a rest which has in no way increased the strength-producing, resistance-forming faculties of body or mind. The cured nervous patient is he who knows not frequent relapse, he who recognises in his superb nervous temperament one of the greatest assets of living, who feels a thrill of doing, and sacrificing, and overcoming. Such a cure is, and can only be, self-cure. Abiding self-cure embraces conscious supremacy—a supremacy based upon unyielding resolution to accomplish to the limit of a properly conserved and developed self; and upon that higher resolution of essential resignation, a resignation which accepts the inevitable with its hidden message of inspiration.

## CHAPTER XVII

### OUR MORAL SELVES

**The Moral Nature.**—The problem of living would be relatively simple were it limited to our observance of the physical and chemical laws governing the body, and the practical, work-a-day principles of psychology and logic. But the developing personality early feels the tug of a new and complicating force of existence, a hidden yet intense influence which he calls his better nature. Ever after the birth of his so-called moral self, all relations, plans, hopes and fears, expressed in conduct, or hidden in thought or feeling, become accountable to this ever-changing standard.

In our study of the physical causes and treatment of nervousness, it was found that a few comparatively simple departures from definite and easily-recognised laws accounted for most disorders from this source. The mental causes were more numerous and complex, but still capable of relatively clear systematisation. But as we enter upon the final section of our studies in the reeducation of the nervous, and are forced to face that indefinite sea of possibilities of conduct, with the recognition that, in a way, every character is a law to himself, the complexities of moral adjustment appear appalling, and the probability of arriving at sane and wholesome

and helpful practical conclusions appears remote. It seems that the moral nature itself embraces all of the mind's complexities, infinitely increased by the multiples of right and wrong, expediency and necessity, intention and impulse. The head-hunter spends weeks of tense impatience in ambush, awaiting an opportunity to slay and behead any innocent member of the tribe of his hereditary enemies. Successful, he returns to his village, thrilled and joyous, proudly bearing his gruesome trophy; and, greeted with the acclaim and congratulations of his tribesmen, takes to his hut the bride for whom he has so long risked and waited, but who spurned him until he could lay at her feet this token of his prowess. Her standard of morality would have forced her to live and die unwed and childless, rather than give herself to one whom we denote a sneaking, brutal, remorseless murderer. How different the bride with the missionary ideal! She leaves home, civilisation, comforts and culture, with the man of her choice, because he is possessed of that spirit of sacrifice which makes him willing to give strength and health, and life itself perchance, that a few beams of higher morality may enter the lives of these same benighted, virtuous murderers. Each bride has made her choice and cast her lot upon the basis of moral standards, but what an infinity separates their ideals! In a sense, this very infinity of moral variability exists in every developed character.

From this complexity of possible moral variations, practical simplicity appears when basic groupings

are made; thus morality may be helpfully reduced to three fundamental forms. The morality of the child, of the head-hunter, of all primitive minds and races, is that of fear—fear-morality growing out of the instinct of self-preservation. This grade of morality has ever been, and will continue for many generations to be, the only moral force which can restrain many, or compel their conduct and turn it away from the brutally, instinctively selfish. Even in homes of carefully taught and earnestly lived high standards, the individual will be found who is incapable of being controlled along moral lines by any other influence than fear. Scientifically, these unfortunates are regarded as examples of arrested moral development.

The average standard of morality may be termed utilitarian, and is based upon the attainment of so-called practical ends. "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," "Live and let live;" the common relation between employer and employee—a carefully measured return of service for an accurately discriminated wage; the righteousness of "justice;" the "square deal;" our conception of "fair play;" the great bulk of ethics governing man's relations to man—are all based upon this standard, which, when fulfilled, answers the demands of the average conscience.

Idealistic moralilty, the final classification, is frequently termed "impracticable," and those who follow its leadings "too good for this life." Yet civilisation produces few who have not attained some

ideal morality, who have not had some vision of gain not expressed in comfort of body, or broadening acres, or multiplied chattels, in stocks and bonds or increase of bank credit. Especially rare is it to find the nature sufficiently responsive to belong to the nervous temperament, who has not felt the thrill of inspiration, who has not touched power, or beauty, or nobility in his ideals, who has not dreamed dreams and seen visions that would lead him away from craven fear, above mediocre practicability, toward the realm of soul greatness.

All morality, no matter what its grade or incentive, is a fight of the relatively good with the relatively better. All morality lays a restraining hand upon the present that the future may attain increase. For any individual, moral living is the art of living up to his highest standards, is the doing the best he knows. For every individual, crooked thinking when clear thinking is possible, ugly emotions when harmonious feeling is known, and weak and ill willing after active and resolute willing have been conceived, stand for immoral living. The entire sphere of human conduct coming under the discriminations of right and wrong is included under the term morality. Here we note the ever-ascending scale of time. Augustine, devout and sainted, was a leader and guide of religious thought and conduct in his time, but to-day his standards of morality would make him "impossible." Morality answers the ever-reiterated "why" of conduct, morality searchingly questions the "how" of all plans. Intellect selects the object of attention,

will holds fast thereto, but morality dictates the choice of selection and attention. It abides in that mysterious "Holy of Holies" of our souls, deep down where swiftly, silently, fatefully, work our purposes of will and choice.

It is given ideas to crystallise into ideals, and clear-thinking ideals guide our morals. Thus there should be a close relation between education and morality. But highly-developed intellect may be coldly unmoral or foully immoral, for our moral nature is ever more than intellect. It is intellect's censor and guide, giving direction to thought, ever moulding the expression of emotion, keenly alert to warn and direct the will. The moral self thus enters into every relation of life. Man's attitude toward his surroundings and to his inner self constitutes two widely separated manifestations of his moral nature. It finds constant and far-reaching expression in the conduct which marks his reactions to the infinitude of persons and things. Here it is ever being influenced by the customs and habits and standards of society, or firmly moulded or sternly rebuked by the mandates of law, for rare is the individual who is not constantly stimulated or restrained by social and penal influences. But humanity, numberless as the sands of the sea, and the bewildering conglomerate of things, are but limited in scope when compared to the truly limitless fields of self over which our moral nature may attain supreme command, or entangled and confused, grope wildly or weakly, or beaten, may grovel in humiliating servitude.

While human nature has ever failed to adequately realise in practical living the moral leadings of the soul, it has never failed to reach up for the something better than self. Mankind is essentially religious, and when morality recognises a motive above the selfish it becomes religious. Religion is morality seeking direction through the inspiration of the unseen. In seeking this unseen, the human mind has ventured into ten thousand recesses, and dragged from the void of imagination and given form in wood and stone, in sculpture or effigy, in doctrine or creed, in sect or belief, to as many representations. Religion has terrified, coerced, stultified, wooed, directed, thrilled, inspired and saved. False religions have tortured, and the truest religions, misused, have tortured, too; for religion has all too frequently dispensed with morality, and the crimes done in its name—the name which should stand for the highest blessing of existence—are untellable. Even to-day, religion is used by too many as a convenience, a cloak, making possible a comfortable continuance of immoral habits, a spiritual lightning rod to protect them from the effects of conscious evil-doing. Almost equally blind is the effort of morality to dispense with religion. The soul is not satisfied with the bread of its own making; it only thrives on the manna from some heaven. Thoughtless indeed is he who has not recognised that life is a developmental process, that man is here to be changed. We take ourselves seriously through all our seven ages, from "mewling infant" to "sans teeth, sans eyes, sans

taste, sans everything," and prepare for and accept the inevitable flow and ebb of the physical; but too often we ignore our inner self, our vital self, and our attendant Nemesis, failing to realise that our moral nature is our only possession capable of eternal adjustments. Our body's needs, our mind's abilities, chain our attention and hold fast our devotion, until, as Huxley said, "Clever men are as common as blackberries; the rare thing is to find a good one." And Tyndall, materialistic physicist, steeped in the atheism of his day, recognises this same need in his statement, "There is a thing of more value than science: it is nobility of character."

Within man's moral nature, within his commonly called spiritual self, abides a power deeper than life itself—a power which can reign independent of surroundings, which can thrive in a quagmire of immorality, grow and glow in the midst of vileness and filth of word and act, live steadfast and kindly when surrounded by resentment and misunderstanding and injustice, remain serene and strong when assailed by loss and disaster, when heart-love has been crushed, fortunes snatched away, and reputation assailed and bedraggled. Within the moral nature abides the power to assimilate the assaults of life, to transmute suffering of body, mind and soul into perseverance, patience, charity and victory.

**Morals and Nervous Health.**—Religion and medicine have been unfavourably, and often detrimentally, associated through the varying fortunes of humanity, and to-day, in spite of certain fairly

successful combinations, these two forces for man's good are still respectfully requesting each other to 'tend to its own affairs.' It has been Religion's habit to preempt all available morality, and Medicine has had, goodness knows, problems enough of a purely material sort to keep her busy these last enlightened generations. But Medicine has donned the seven-league boots, and is coming to her own with marvellous strides. The accuracies of medical science work each day ten thousand miracles in the saving of life and limb, in dulling the tooth of suffering, in the annihilation of plague and pestilence, in causing the very hand of death to hesitate.

Science has satisfied the medical mind through its clear and definite solutions of a growing list of practical problems vitally concerning the physical well-being of human kind. And until quite recently, since broadening Science herself has recognised the impossible limitations and consequent untenability of its former materialism, Medicine has refused to see any reasons for troubling herself with the metaphysical. There were plenty of theories attempting to explain nervousness upon physical or mental grounds, obviating any need for recognition of the so-called spiritual. Even to-day, few medical teachers refer to, even if they accept, the tremendous influence of the moral self in producing nervous illness. That wonderful inner self which chooses from life's accumulated thoughts, realisations, memories and desires, and which uses the powers of will, hope and belief, constitutes man's sole possession from birth to death,

a superb treasure, which he can use or abuse in a thousand ways. His mind is a gift which he may develop, enhance, beautify; but his character is a victory. Character is not innate. It is born in the midst of effort and strife, in the determined rebound from depression and reaction from the falls which are certain in the press and choke of the work of shop, field and mart; it is a product of the victories won in those struggles for perfection which are the battles of choice for all worthy souls.

The nervous character is by nature a moral character. The highly adaptable nervous temperament, ever responsive and responding, is inherently the most keenly attuned to the whisperings of the "still, small voice;" while much of the suffering of the neurotic testifies to the keen sensitiveness of his moral nature. We have seen how man's physical toxins torture his body, tangle his thoughts and disorganise his nervous wholeness. But in his moral nature he possesses an irresistible, stabilising and equalising power, capable of assimilating most physical and mental disturbances, and of keeping his nature true to his conceptions of right, even in the face of insistent calls to surrender. Within the developed moral self abides a force which can lift the character above the narrowness of ignorance, can protect from the disaster of impulse, can convert complaints into approbation, can rouse and invigorate indolence and indifference, and shame dishonesty and selfishness into honour and thoughtfulness, can rob drudgery of

all semblance of slavishness, and sweeten the bitterest tears of remorse.

In our final analysis, nervous illness presents a problem which is fundamentally moral. Rarely will one suffering nervously be found in whom some damaging moral defect is not present, ever adding its venom to physical and mental toxins. The whole question of human attitude resides in the moral self. Unworthy attitudes can decimate ease, poise, comfort and satisfaction in the physically strong and in those otherwise mentally well-balanced; just as the wholesome attitudes heal the wounds of conflict, and brighten and lighten the dark days of failure, and bring the ray of hope or the support of faith into all those relations which would otherwise be empty of good.

Neurasthenia, psychasthenia, hypochondriasis, hysteria, alcoholism, drug addictions, all are based upon certain moral problems, and as these disorders increase their power over the individual, the moral effects they produce become more and more evident, until one rarely meets an extreme sufferer of such nervous disturbances in whom most idealistic, and even utilitarian morality, has not been defeated. In many such lives, moral wretchedness is evidenced by the development of a selfishness which becomes dominant, reckless and insatiable. The best and the worst of man will ever be expressed through his moral nature. The bare soul of the neurotic who has surrendered to unwholesome attitude, to unworthi-

ness of thought and desire, to literal demoralisation, is one of humanity's sad spectacles. He has relinquished that touch of divinity which would ever lead man upward, which never ceases to plead that he choose the better part, even as he slips deeper and deeper into the quicksands and quagmires of sensation, of indolence and the elemental passions.

All do wrong, all make mistakes, all sin consciously, and many deliberately, and shame and remorse hang as mill-stones about many hapless necks, weights dragging them further and further into the depths, from which, to the defeated neurotic, there appears no power, human or divine, to deliver. Unworthy habits lay hold, insinuating, insistent, mastering, and each surrender lets out a few drops of the blood of happiness, and injects remorse or shame in its place. A moral sickness becomes chronic, attended with depths of suffering unknown to mortal illness, and dread and recklessness attend, and confidence goes, and a nervous illness develops, with its roots sapping the very life of the soul. The finer the nature, the more beautiful the ideals, the more intense the desires for right living, the more potent is evil thought, wrong attitude and the hurt of shame in robbing character of its freshness and poise and worth, and reducing it to a vassalage of distraught nerves.

Again, the empty soul's restlessness is the enemy to nervous peace. Many have consistently failed in cultivating worthy thoughts and wholesome emotions, have sipped of life's pleasures, hither, thither

and yon, have known but shallow living in this deep life, and, reaching the full tide of maturity, recognise the need of the something lacking—a need which they have not the will nor the inclination to replace. Multitudes of well-to-do women, with minds but superficially equipped and souls more empty than childhood's, coveting attention with a craving which knows no brooking, seek professional help and guidacne for their multiform nervous illnesses, while in their empty moral nature is a defect which makes seriously difficult any wholesome, hopeful, constructive work toward their restoration. Long months of primitive physical, mental and moral reeducation, during which time the hands and mind and moral nature become acquainted with stern-visaged reality, constitute the first step of their reformation; and in place of the void—the hungry, empty void, with its cry of the starving soul—they begin to learn how good life really is, how full of good it is, and how good it is to live.

As we meet the joyous life, the fragrantly happy life of good men and women, most of whom have not been blessed with a superabundance of this world's goods, with educations frequently limited to the "three R's," yet able to look calmly upon the frantic, wearied men and women of the world—the children of fashion and wealth and learning—with steady, comfortable, sane eyes, the realisation comes strongly that their joy is from an inner source; the realisation should come forcibly that the moral can add something wholesomely, helpfully, healingly

good to every relation of life. The moral eyes see clear the thoughts and desires and willings that course through the mind, and pick the best, ever the best.

True morality demands such growth as will make moral action, first, a deliberate, ultimately, an instinctive choice, in which attention is maintained firmly in the line of greatest resistance. Worthy morality recognises that there is one truth which must be faced by every living soul—that truth which stands for ultimate destiny, expressed in the choice of self-denial and self-sacrifice and temporary suffering for right's sake, possible only through religiously idealised morality.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### REBELLION

**Defective Adjustments.**—Man's almost omnipotence becomes forcibly evident when we realise how bravely, how heroically, he, in his puny weakness, has faced mighty existence. Physically inferior to scores of other beings, a mere puppet in the grip of elemental forces, he has ever fought and will ever fight on for supremacy. Campaign succeeds campaign, and the warfare shows no promise of ceasing. Each individual life early finds itself drafted into the strife—the strife with surroundings, with inanimate things in all their profusion and confusion, and the war with his kind—the battles of opinion, battles of taste, battles for bread, battles for rights; and as if this were not enough, he finds within his own soul tendencies and instincts, desires and temptations, with which he must do constant battle, or certain defeat of all that makes for success in existence is fated. Life is a conflict with things and people, and of the primitive self pitted against, not his body, but his soul. The victory cannot be physical, for the physical is doomed to relatively early weakness and decay. The powers of the mind, marvellous as they are, cannot win the peace that satisfies the inner self. The only adjustments which stand out above the con-

flicts of existence are those which can merit the "Well done!" of the moral self.

It is a mighty existence. Many of us but live on its edge. Now and then we meet the full-souled man or woman who, we realise, has ever thought fairly and dealt truly, who has attained a philosophy which assures an unchanging power of purpose, a life of serenity, and the victory of peace. More live life sadly, galley slaves that toil manacled to their labours, dejected, sordid things. Weak of face and of spirit, they have met life only to surrender. Still others take it all hard, and rebellion chokes the joys of existence with wild impetuous outbursts, or smothers with a smouldering and peace-destroying fire. Rebellion divides life's fighting forces into groups, waging wasteful war with each other. It separates the individual from his kind, and may even make of him an outcast.

Rebellion is one of the commonest defects of adjustment. Much rebellion is based on ignorance. Unquestionably there is a confusing babble of orders, and punishment and reprimand come through mistakes honestly made. So much that is elemental within man bids him hither or tempts him thither. Instincts, desires and impulses early test his loyalty, even before he knows. It would seem that life has been deliberately planned to teach each individual by the rough handling, the jolts, and the knocks, which follow even innocent disobedience to law; for the strain of life and its tempations lay their weight early upon the souls of youth. The beckonings of

pleasure, the love of ease, the solicitations of the interest of the hour, can be humoured by all for the time; but in no life are conditions provided for continuous and uninterrupted enjoyment. The fulfilment of all wish and desire, the having all that we want when we happen to want it, are ordained for no human being. Such a plan for life, though backed with the most resolute of wills, the most astute of minds, is doomed to inevitable failure. All time has been strewn with the unhappy wrecks of those who set out determined to alter this inalterable law, who have resisted the inevitable when it came, and resented that certain fate decreed by the "powers that be," and who have finally succeeded only in drinking the bitter dregs of the cup which they would have filled brimming full of self-ordained happiness.

There is a plan of life which the simplest may follow, and which, followed in sincerity and earnestness, leads on to inevitable success. Existence has provided every means reason could ask for perfecting moral living. Tempations themselves, ever at hand, but afford opportunities for higher thinking. Every hour has its call for some act unthought till inspired by the higher self; and good deeds and higher thoughts stand always for well-willing. In life's very obstacles, in the very strife of its conflicts, the weight of its burdens and the darkness of its saddest hours, appear forces which, when utilised by character, add strength to strength. Out of the hard, the heavy, the dark and the sad, character may emerge, perfected and victorious. The body,

adaptable as it is, cannot accomplish this. Superb as are the powers of intellect, they crumble and fall in the face of such attacks. But there is a mass of power behind body and intellect which can make man the invincible fighter, incapable of surrender to the forces about him, superior to any possibility of disloyalty to the best or rebellion to the Master Force. This power is commonly neglected by most, and so rarely used by many, that unfortunates pass this way and never know its saving thrill, never feel that impulse welling within which gives to its possessor a strength over life's discouragements which he may well call divine.

**The Problem of Self-Assertion.**—But weak and defective and failing as he may be in his moral adjustments, man is a fighting animal. He has fought the beasts of plain and jungle well-nigh to their extinction. He has carried the torch of his learning into the world's darkest recesses, and has wrapped the globe with his cables bearing lightning-sped information to all its parts. He has fought his way from primitive weakness to a control of the elemental forces, which has long since made him physically the master of living things. And to-day he is a powerful engine with a will which brooks little interference with his purposes. Modern man is in position to exercise a large degree of self-assertion. He is a master of many things. He is the director of many forces. He has so successfully wrung from Nature her secrets that his material "cup runneth over." His wealth accumulates until an island nation can

spend $500,000,000 a year for luxuries, and a small continent can utterly waste $100,000,000 a day in slaughternig its choicest sons, and keep up this expenditure, not months, but years. Man has long since so proved his prowess, his ability to cope with the mighty forces of existence, that it is to-day, for nations and for individuals, not so much a question of self-assertion as of self-repression.

By obeying the promptings of the voices of desire and ambition, man has multiplied his wealth and beautified his domain. But there is an obedience which is slavery. There are voices within which guide man, not to victory, but to defeat. He must early learn that his passions, magnificent forces as they are, capable as they will always be of adding zest and beauty to life, will never be forces which should be recognised as leaders. But human nature feels no influences more keenly, and is too ready to accept passions' counsel and to rebel at any control which would question their authority. The problem of self-assertion will always be one of choice of the power which shall be utilised in the furtherance of life and of the methods by which this force shall be used. The balance between self-assertion and self-repression is one which must ever change as the battle ebbs and flows. During the hours of strife, for the attack, emphatically when the tide is turning against the forces, and in the dark days following defeat, assertion must ever stand out and all the forces worthy of use must be enlisted. But in the days of victory, when the enemy has been overcome and the

spoils of war are in our hands, then must restraint ever pluck the sleeve of self and hold it in check.

Our world is truly a complex manifestation of force. We have our beginning in its miraculous expression, through which new life springs into being. It is force which keeps us all along the way, and force in another form finally ends our existence. Force is essential to life; the force which drives, held in check at the right time by the force which restrains, will ever be the basis of progress. Puny man has confronted the tremendous possibilities of existence, not with the power which he has generated within his weak self, but by yoking his mind with the forces of Nature, and working and living in harmony with powers which would otherwise destroy. That throbbing, irresistible mass of metal, which fairly spurns its steel roadway as it speeds from city to city, the steam locomotive, represents Nature's powers in action, directed and controlled by man's hand. In the electric dynamo, man yokes his mind with the stored sun-power of ages gone, as he thoughtlessly feeds his boilers; or uses that same sun-force after it has lifted and carried the ocean's strength to the mountain-tops. The human idea harnesses Niagara, and turns a wild, heartless, relentless rush of power into a humble factory-hand. Mental force is a higher expression of power than physical force. But man himself creates neither. He is but a wonder-machine which utilises force—force which comes to him through food and drink, which passes into his mind from the volumes of history, from the tomes of sci-

ence, from the book of the law, there to accumulate, and to be expressed by him in word or act, wisely or ill. Man may develop self into a dynamo which can transmute the elemental forces into tireless servants, unthinking, unprotesting, unresting; which can transform thought into the actions that erect dynasties and destroy monarchies; which may vitalise frailty of body, the simple, guileless mind, the untutored, undesigning heart, into forces which will lead, and sway, and inspire, and save thousands yet unborn. As surely as mind is becoming the master of matter, so ultimately will character become the ruler of reason.

Rebellion.—Mankind in general is, however, still far removed from that state of approximate perfection in which mind and body are the willing servants of the moral self. Character as a mastering force has come to her own only in the exceptional individual. With many that "wild beast of self" is still the power which periodically, if not consistently, controls. That untrained self—the undeveloped self, the self-seeking self, that self so greedy for gold, for position, for ease, for power—is still the unconquered master of the individual. Self-assertion perverted is a dominating force which rebelliously resists the correcting hand of Nature, which resents the direction of higher reason to follow any but the path of least resistance; which revolts in the face of, and spurns the counsel of idealistic morality. The self that lives for self rejects the guidance of law and order, scorns the counsel of righteousness, or right-wayness, and uses its marvellous capacity to

ends which can be but destructive, as all misguided force must ultimately become. An inevitable servitude, inevitable failure and despair must be the end of such rebellion. The mob can never remain master. Mob forces are ever destructive forces, and sooner or later that very lawless mass will beg for a master who will organise and guide them, or they starve. That very force which, restrained and guided, will produce the choicest of characters—lives fairly inspiring in their potent usefulness—when misselected or misdirected rends human peace asunder. The hundred-ton passenger locomotive, eager, panting to carry man's cares, to augment his pleasures, to minify his labours, becomes a relentless demon of death and destruction when not controlled by its master's hand. The dynamo which lends its labour-saving force to all manner of machines, which speeds the velvet wheels of pleasure, and which diffuses a gentle glow to library, nursery and sick room, can send forked, death-dealing lightning to ruthlessly burn, wreck and destroy property and life, if it escapes the wise hand of restraint. Even so it is with those forces which pass into man from his surroundings and are expressed by him through muscle, mind and spirit.

We begin our rebellion young. The child resents the perversity of things with an intensity equalling that of his more expressive elders. The foolish, weakening habit of reviling obstructions to our progress, interruptions to our pleasure, annoyances in our work, occasioned by the resistance of inanimate

objects, is an early element of imperfect adjustment producing a common nervous leakage. There are those who have an endless chain of curses for the motor which has "gone dead," for the plough which loses its point on a hidden rock, for the roof that leaks, for the plumbing that freezes, for the storm that does not fit their convenience. Many a piece of work partly finished is torn in shreds when an innocent needle breaks in the machine. The dish passively overheated is doomed to destruction if it unconsciously burns certain hands. The habit of fussing at things which are harmless and useful additions to pleasure and comfort is one of the senseless forms of rebellion, displaying lack of reason and deficiency in restraint—a misdirection of energy productive only of waste.

But the damage of such expressions of immaturity is insignificant when compared to that ceaseless, sullen murmur of resentment which wells up from the lives of the many who feel themselves victims of the "eternal grind" of toil. And grind it is, and has been since so-called enlightenment has multiplied the world's work until its requirements are insatiable and its demands never met; from the days when the captives were forced to make "bricks without straw" through the untellable slaveries of the ages, even to the present day with its wailing "Song of the Shirt:"

> "With its stitch, stitch, stitch,
> In poverty, hunger and dirt;
> Sewing at once with a double thread
> A shroud as well as a shirt."

No wonder murmurings have grown into cursings, and poverty, driven to desperation—rebellious—has stolen, and murdered and prostituted self, in the helpless, hopeless struggle. But thanks to the very selfishness of industry, steam and electrictiy have become cheaper at last than human flesh and blood, and the grind is no longer the hapless slavery of the past.

By the many the joy of work has never been learned. Servants resent their servitude, but not with that constructive resentment which leads them to do all well, and then do that little complemental more which stands for unusual service, and having thus done, to spend some leisure, possibly a sleep hour, in gaining the additional knowledge which is the price of all real superiority. The mother rebels at the time she must give her home and children, envying the neighbour who is risking her children's future soul-welfare in the hands of an eye-serving nursery maid. The son of wealth rebels at what he calls the "grind" of study, and jeopardises his future self-esteem by frittering away his college hours in self-indulgent license. Bankers resent the responsibilities of their honourable positions; lawyers and doctors and even ministers work in an atmosphere of protest, perverting life's potential joy, their one opportunity for winning sustained happiness, as they fail to adjust themselves harmoniously to the work of hand and mind, whatever it is, that knocks at the door of their strength to-day. For most workers the so-called "eternal grind" is but a self-pitying sentiment, hauled into lives which should be wholesomely

content. Those who curse industry to-day are far more often rebels to progress, disrupters of their own peace, breeders of the disease of discontent, than the helpless victims of the "iron heel of greed."

The Indian possessed for many centuries a land fairly teeming with force-producing wealth. The great lakes of crude petroleum and the thousands of square miles of dynamic and comfort-promising coal were useless to him, for his mind had no conception of their value. Most of us pass through life to-day, poor, miserable, wretched, starving and freezing, even as did the ignorant Red Man of old, with wealth at our very door. We call it misfortune. We are yet too ignorant to reach out and take these hard, black experiences and kindle them into strength and warmth, into power and gladness, but let our souls starve in the midst of unrecognised plenty. When misfortunes come, we rebel in hot anger and become perfect psychic desperadoes; or we grow into the habit of condemnation because of losses in business, failure of crops, or miscarriage of plans, looking for faults in all that occurs, making ourselves and others miserable, forever on edge, and finally degenerating into chronic kickers.

Rebellion in our relations to others may be expressed in the habit of cultivating dissatisfaction; in giving way to expressions of acute grouch which ever tends to become chronic. Rebellion in other hearts finds its expression in a malice which is harboured through the years, a malice which quickly puts strife into their relations with associates, and robs them

and others of that inspiring wholesomeness of contact which is the normal relationship of all helpful-hearted coworkers. Rebellion smouldering through the years may turn one from all honest review of his own faults, causing him to look outside of self for some one upon whom to lay the blame for trouble which is of his own making. This all tends to develop despair, and despair accepts that wretched attitude toward all of life's relations which stands for the bitterness of failure. He has thought but superficially who does not early recognise that failure is a universal experience; that all who plan, that all who strive, are certain to meet obstacles which they cannot surmount, combinations of circumstances which they could not foresee; that all at some time must be the objects of misconception and misjudgment. Failure is one of life's sternest lessons, but a lesson which, learned, mellows and enriches and strengthens for the fight along higher lines; for failure is not the final word to any but the weakling and the coward.

Of all forms of imperfect adjustments as expressed in rebellion to our surroundings, that which makes possible the home of strife is the most sad and the most destructive to those inspiring, tender leadings which should so hearten our work-a-day lives. It is a rebellion to the very sacredness of living which allows home strife. Sulkiness, impatience, and irritability—the undue susceptibility to anger—are rebels which invade the very sanctity of human relationships, when they pollute that home atmosphere in which the soul should find its tenderest mercies,

its sweetest solaces, its most joyous associations. What a sacrilegious warfare is the damning home feud, which drives so many to find pleasure or forgetfulness in those indulgences which can only be purchased with loss to manhood and womanhood. Disagreements must be. No persons of red blood and minds worthy the name can associate without them, but disagreement only means discord in the common, the weak and the unworthy. Disagreements, keen, active, aggressive, should be stimulating and wholesome influences. But more frequently are they occasions in which the intensity of feeling is far out of proportion to the whole subject. How often, instead of developing that wholesome self-respect which grows out of earnest, fair competition in argument or discussion, they descend into the vulgarity of personalities, and wrench and twist and hurt! In how many homes does the din of discord fairly drive its members into a frenzy of tension, when home, above all relations of man's making, should stand for "strife shut out and love shut in." In all life's relations contentions will come. Many will grow out of ignorance, and many more will be the expressions of resentment or rebellion in the form of wilful contention. Men of culture rise above feeling in the matter of disagreement, and discuss their differences academically. It is given man to gently, seriously, kindly, firmly review all legitimate questions of human relationship thoughtfully and constructively; but the tight throats, the tense muscles and tenser feelings which accompany even the discussions of the

cut of the gown or the seasoning of the soup, mark the wretched weakness of those natures who have rebelled against peace-producing restraint.

If we are to win the battle of personal mastery, we must lay hold on a force higher than reason alone, for force of mind not governed by force of spirit does not make man good. The mind may be as restless as the storm-tossed sea, giving way to outbreaks of intensest anger, sulking or pouting for days with a childish craving to be petted back into sweetness, chronically irritable, ever dissatisfied, resenting and contending. Misdirected mental force may be wildly devilish in its actions, and in such an atmosphere nerves of steel become unstrung. And the poor soul pleads for the peace which is not.

This capacity for rebellion, so strong, with such a large variety of manifestations, was not given man to encompass his defeat; but, misdirected, becomes a force which, without idealistic moral guidance, he will ever use to his destruction. But when he finally directs his power of rebellion against that self which hates and fears and surrenders, he will create that new order of being—the superman.

## CHAPTER XIX

### SURRENDER

**Life's Inevitable Disasters.**—Loss begins in childhood. The babe is king of us all. The grim visage of the warrior softens in the presence of its cooing innocence; nobility stops and turns and does homage; rich and poor, high and low, young and old, kneel at the cradle to welcome the bright, new, young soul. But it cannot last. Even with the realisation of its imperialistic power, the sceptre is snatched away, and life's first inevitable loss is vaguely felt. Later, impetuous, hot-hearted youth looks, and longs, and loves, and demands, and is refused; and the light of life goes out for the time, and misery and anguish tear the throbbing heart, and bitter despair seems to invade the soul. Mother's teaching has painted "goodness" across the brow of all, but contact soon reveals that goodness is often but a mask, and that some do not even pretend to live under this epithet; and that tragic disaster of the young life, the loss of trust in a human being, the threatened loss of trust in human nature, come to shake the foundations of faith. It is as inevitable as life itself that youth cannot wax into maturity without losing one after another of those wonderful ideals which made his world so glorious.

But only the weak lose heart, for is there not a uni-

verse of superb wealth and fascinating things, which promises our manifold abilities insatiable, unending satisfaction? And so, resolutely and intensely, maturity lays hold on the things of the world, to know, to possess, to use them, with a vision of undying joy. But how soon, in spite of our protests with self, the disillusioning realisation creeps in that the power of things to please is limited; that with the addition of possessions comes a subtraction of appreciation. On the heels of this come other losses, as we learn how rapidly our gold loses its power to buy; how even that which we once called beauty, of form, or tone, or colour, is failing in its charm. Even that maturity, which we are prone to call successful, seems fated to drift toward increasing emptiness, through a growing realisation of the inability of those things which we handle, and taste, and see, to bring the depths of satisfaction which stands for happiness. These are some of the inevitable losses of the developing soul, losses which some claim simply show the atrophy of the human powers for enjoyment; losses which others affirm, declaring that their affirmation is based upon experiences as real as any of life, are but a clearing of the stage for something higher, better and grander. The one who has not realised that life is an inevitable losing has thought but lightly upon the realities of existence. How much of this loss leaves an emptiness unfilled, how much of it becomes an opportunity for greater possessions, can never be determined by people or things, by riches or beauty, but will ever be a question of the inner self.

To the developed mind, to the living, growing soul, most so-called losses are but apparent. But most of us find ourselves lacking in the understanding, the philosophic insight, to remain morally stable in the midst of so much to confuse; and we at times wonder why we are here. Life is so heartless, so cruel, so disappointing, and the conditions which it lays upon us seem so merciless. Until we have thought our best thoughts deeply and truly, until we have felt with the charity which knows no bitterness, until we have dedicated our wills to the best within us and opened our hearts to the best about us, calamity will ever grip us with a crushing force. We are quick, in the face of trouble, to speak of the limit of our powers of endurance, and for many that limit is quickly reached. Rare powers of endurance are possessed by the few. For others, surrender to the secretly coveted license possible in rebellion, or despairing surrender of effort, resistance, or even intention, is a defective reaction which honeycombs foundations, and constitutes the defect in many nervous lives.

In these days when money buys so much and there is so much money to spend, gold has blinded the eyes of the many to the mission of suffering. Thinking to purchase immunity from the ills of life in some miraculous way, many parents fail utterly, even as perchance their elders failed, to translate the messages of suffering to their children, not as a fear-breeding power, an impending threat, but as a wholesome, vitalising, stimulating, preparatory truth. Life is made up of losses, which, to him who is pre-

pared, may become gains. Life will bring to all as they live its span, calamity, suffering in some form, and within the individual's own soul rests the possibility of these inevitable visitations to dishearten, to rob, to paralyse and to putrefy; or to stimulate, to enrich, to vitalise, to purify.

Recklessness.—Brute force, intellectual superiority, independence so-called, the liberty of selfish willing, all appeal to the undeveloped nature as expressions of self, indicating strength of individuality. The developed life is not so much a matter of years as of right living. When the "No" of circumstances comes to interrupt plans, when Fate drops the bar behind the door of beckoning Opportunity, when Disaster ruthlessly crushes and destroys the products of our handiwork, or brings to naught the creations of our fancy; when Death snatches away that which stood for what we called our immortality—the one who was to take up the thread of progress where we dropped it—the aggressive nature rebels. It may be an intense, destructive explosion of force, of grief and hate, wrecking in a few hours or weeks that which can never be replaced; or deep-lying sullen, unforgiving recklessness may pervert the ardour of life into calculating resentment, and slowly lock all the well-springs of goodness, even as the midwinter cold congeals the sap of tree and flower.

A touch of recklessness is good for all of us. Occasions exist where the best of our knowledge fails and where overcaution would result in useless inertia—then a dash of recklessness, the willingness to

take the chance until the reality of the situation is revealed, is a saving grace for the timid and fearsome. The highest form of courage which man has yet developed, that courage which makes impossible any expressions of selfish, heartless, destructive heedlessness—moral courage, man's highest deciding force—not infrequently finds the only right road the one which hesitating caution would label as reckless. But most reckless expressions are not those which have a speaking acquaintance with so high a quality as moral courage. When we give up to these impulses, we are usually surrendering ourselves into the clutch of the commonplace; we are usually but dashing down the incline of least resistance.

In a little Southern town, for a number of years a modest front yard has been a veritable garden of beauty. An impetuous soul is the housewife there—a finely-wrought, high-strung woman, with a nervous heredity doubly neurotic. Nervous invalidism was apparently foreordained, and perforce partially accepted. But spirit was there, and rebellion to fate and things and people—that burning hot kind, possible to those who have both nerves and auburn hair. But rebellions did not cure; they led on from bad to worse. Finally a wise surrender was made; surrender to counsel which adjusted diet, which ordered strength-generating work of muscle, which made clear the limitations of heredity, rectified defects of teaching, and revealed the exhausting uselessness of recklessly directed efforts to follow the dictates of assumed duties. The yard space was limited in that

home. The realisation of the necessity for active, daily, physical effort came clearly. Impulsiveness, impetuosity, aggressiveness, did not disappear, but found new expression. When these qualities came to the surface, they were given ample and full expression through decisive, emphatic punctuations, not in speech, but in vicious jabs into the soil with hoe and spade. And her "jim-jams," as she called them, were worked off in the garden; and for months each year beauty, rich, fragrant, rare, and in profusion, tells its sweet tale of wisely directed recklessness.

Through our study of work, we recognise how exceptional is a wholesome attitude toward life's productive duties. Smouldering rebellion at these very fundamentals of happiness exists in the hearts of many workers. Expressed through the recklessness of selfish ends, through the dishonesty of defective effort, the carelessness of indolence, or the resentful bitterness of envy, many of the employed drag out a dogged existence, slavishly, not masterfully, rebelliously, not victoriously. Resenting the whole industrial scheme of life, adding no drop of wholesomeness, they inject naught but venom into that so commonly strained relationship between employer and employee. Their rebellion seeks the adjustment of life's affairs to their personal wills; insists on that impossible license of reckless individuality which makes of life, not a thing of law and order, but a chance medley, a hodge-podge of personal whims and desires and opinions and ideas, robbing it of that

stability of form essential to stability of purpose.

Reckless disregard of one's righteous conception of duty, a conception unwarped by self-deception, is one of life's most exhausting forms of surrender. It so rapidly discounts the good, fades the freshness, dulls the interest, and embitters the sweetness of existence, that the joy of living may be exhausted at thirty. And what a surrender this is! How little one who so lives gets of the possible richness of life, while those who cooperate with the laws of well-doing and well-thinking seem ever to be renewing their youth; and instead of nervous exhaustion laying its palsying hand upon the interests of existence, even as youth blossoms into the fulness of maturity, strength is added to strength—and many who have so lived are young at seventy, content, confident, hopeful and strong. They have allowed the forces of good the right of way through their souls, and have not been prematurely exhausted through a useless and embittering resistance to those forces which challenge us all, through apparent defeat and change, and loss and pain, to develop that character which is more than ideals, which is deeper and higher and broader than things.

Despair.—The surrender of reason or restraint to the dominating self expressed in reckless rebellion, can but belittle the better living essential to the sensitive nature of the nervous. Even so, it is not comparable in its hurt of all that goes to make self-mastery, to the surrender of despair. The aggressive nature becomes reckless, and thinks or acts reck-

lessly, while the weaker nature buries its initiative in the mire of despair. And for many, despair is so easy, apparently an instinctive reaction to the oppressions of circumstance. Many have never risen to the level of healthy views, have never looked out upon existence from a comprehensive vantage-point. Life has been but a multiplication of painful or pleasurable details, lacking in coherency or governing principles, depending upon those commonplace forces which are all that such weak natures seem able to attract to their assistance, and as a result, when compared to their possibilities, they live at half-power, never having attained full man-power. Comfortably housed and carefully groomed, they grumble at existence, and in the midst of infinite plenties—not those which can be purchased by greenbacks or checks, but the plenty which ever waits to attach itself to the right-willing soul—they cultivate dissatisfaction until it has become the infirmity of discontent. For such small souls defeat in life is foreordained. Others wear themselves nervously threadbare through their constant craving for the unpossessed; envious of superiority, wishing—not willing and acting—they too invite inevitable defeat, with its certain anguish of spirit. Complexes result, having the possibilities of unending development. Envy and jealousy can never be sated when once they possess the mind, and the sufferings which are thus entailed may not be recounted—inner illnesses which bring no compensation, self-ordained sufferings barren of possible good.

Illness is pleaded as an excuse for insufficient living by the many who fail to find in the limitations of the physical their opportunity for the refinement of the mental, for the exaltation of the moral. There are illnesses commonly associated with nervous suffering, which the chemist with his laboratories and the physician with his accurate methods of physical diagnosis can never discern. Often the neurotic's ill-feeling is due to an illness of his subconscious mind. Multiplied rebellious, unworthy, self-pitying feelings, which have been allowed their minute in consciousness, then have sunk back into the unconscious, have each added a touch of influence to the sum of self experience; and in time, the effect on the subconscious, thought life of these depressing, devitalising toxins, changes normal spontaneity into sluggishness, normal rebound into inertia, the lilt of innate good feeling into surliness of temper, and the thrilling keenness of hope into dull, deadening despair. And the disease of self-pity not only finally infects its victim's conscious expression, but extends to the sources of feeling apparently beyond the power of consciousness to influence. Thus ultimately may be produced that sad, yet not uncommon, spectacle of the human giant of limitless possibilities —the giant of indomitable soul, whose will could have resolved, and attained the very pinnacles of happiness and content—bound, miserably helpless, imprisoned by the multiplied threads of self-pity.

The test of self comes when through incident, or accident, or disaster, we find ourselves alone. It

may be for the hour, for the day; perchance something big and good and noble has left us, never to return, and the loneliness of a lifetime looms before us. In loneliness we find what we truly are. If we slink about in dismal despair, we are of the weaklings indeed. If we frantically rush hither and thither that we may drown ourselves in the intoxication of excitement, or resort to ever cowardly surcease of memory through drugs, we are making the worst of loneliness; we are robbing self of the very possibility of living those qualities which can make a superlative good out of being alone. That dread of the unentertained self, of the self unstimulated by the touch of friendships or social enjoyments, may resolve into morbid despair. The one who would rise superior to harmful expressions of his nervous system should early cultivate the art of being alone, even though but a few minutes are available daily, a habit of self-communion should be established—communion not with fears, nor ambition, nor resentments, nor hatreds, but devoted to friendship with, and earnest understanding of one's own inner life. Many a person brought face to face with his soul, would not recognise it as his own, so poorly is he acquainted with his inner self. The fear of being alone, the dread of loneliness, even the deep despair which comes when we are the victims of utter human desertion, all fail to discredit any of the essentials of character, when that character is founded upon a moral self with which we are able to commune without shame.

Many moral catastrophes which lead on to despair become imminent when the nature is exhausted through physical or mental toxins. It requires strength to resist. The fight cannot be waged with any success when we are working with our dregs. Common sense should prevent any man from attempting the sterner duties of his life when his strength is depleted. Truly educated is he who has acquired, and wisely and assiduously maintains, that surplus which welcomes fatigue but does not know that exhaustion. Rebellion, time and again, leads on to the exhaustion of despair, of despair filled with gloomy anticipations, reeking with morbid anxieties; and morbid anxieties are ever preparing for emotional hurts; and usually we do not look far for these without finding them.

Illness and loneliness and failure are frequently reacted to with a bitterness which makes existence fairly intolerable. Despair deepens when we find so many of our tears—yes, even our prayers—apparently ignored; for few there are, indeed, who in their extremity do not impulsively turn to an unseen Higher in an appeal for help. To him who measures his blessings in terms of worldly success or by the presence and love of friends and relatives, there is the bitterness of defeat in the refusal of an apparently heedless Heaven to answer prayer in detail; cosmic indifference to human welfare may well lead on to depths of reckless, resentful pessimism. Such despair is akin to the fatalistic despair reflected by Sulpicius, who, when Cicero was commis-

erating him for the loss of his child, answered: "Why should I mourn my daughter's death, when she has but passed down the throat of everlasting oblivion?" Fatalism will ever stand for irreligion, or a religion of decay. The living, growing soul feels in its very essence a certainty which negates such acceptance of the uselessness of its own moral will.

There is a soul-shrivelling attitude toward life, haunting many a poor being through years of nervous wretchedness, which finds in terror an ever-present shadow, chilling and darkening, mood-forming and despair-directing. This terror has been the inspiration for ages of unworthy altars for the worship, not of a Being of human intelligence, not of a Being of sympathetic godly understanding, but of a relentless, heartless Power to be appeased. Despair when shackled to terror can produce a life of mental and moral wretchedness, which makes any hope for nervous restitution vain, unless replaced by faith in a higher "good" which, translated, means a higher God.

There is a calamity which merits despair, a calamity which despair was created to serve—the calamity of spiritual loss. Loss of moral self is greater than loss of crops, or child, or reputation. Times come into all lives when optimism falters, when faith weakens and seems to break, and when we find ourselves submerged under a smothering sea of trouble. Sudden failure of health, overpowering, destructive criticism, the thoughtless, heartless ingratitude of children—these and ten thousand other

disheartening burdens are laid upon humankind. If their weight destroy any small part of the moral self, which at best grows so slowly, then indeed does despair become disaster.

But how ignorantly we choose! How dense we are to the lessons which life would teach, as she lays upon us the inevitable losses and sorrows of existence! When we are thus treated, life is no longer regarding us as children, no longer considering us as simply feeling, thinking creatures, but is appealing to the man within who can smile at the hand of Time, who alone can see in the bitterness of defeat an incentive, a soul-strengthening tonic, and who only can translate the losses of the present into the gains of the future.

## CHAPTER XX

### DISCORD WITH SELF

**The Burden of Self.**—Man may be profoundly unhappy. Some rarely taste serenity. More know a few hours of pleasure or isolated moments of joy, only to quickly slip back to their normal level of disturbed feelings, unsatisfied cravings and painful restlessness. Still others are thrilled with boundless hopes, never to be fulfilled; ideals attract and impel which are never realised. Loves kindle and burn, not unto altar fires, but to cold, grey ashes. The deep questionings within, the struggles, the sufferings which make up man's restless life are ever the expressions of his efforts for internal—may we say, eternal,—adjustment. The burdens with which he cumbers his shoulders for his pilgrimage, packed heavy with the world's goods, are his least load. The weight which he carries in his own heart, the pressing weight which he lays upon his own mind, the relentless, dead weights which he chains to his own soul, constitute the true burdens of his existence. Some of these no earnest, honest soul can escape. They are inherent to a developing existence, and unless one is content with thoughtlessly, recklessly, ignorantly playing at living, he is certain to feel, ever and anon, the tug of his inner burdens.

A rectifying sense of unworthiness comes to stultify the aspiring ego. Failures relentlessly bar the apparent highway to success. "The little done, the undone vast," would palsy Ambition's hand. The sense of sin, as the trail of the serpent, would ever menace the joy of existence. The spiritual conflict, with its multiplied anomalies, utterly confuses many a wearied wayfarer, until all seems hopelessly inconsistent and impossible. Infirmities passed down through heritage to wither the innocent; weaknesses developing in the very heat and struggle of the battle for existence; losses of property, friends, of reputation, of loved ones, of hope and faith; the ever-impending mystery of death, and the unbroken silence shrouding the eternal future, are elements of the ponderous burden which weighs down human life.

As we study the lives of the lower animals, we are struck by their comparatively limited capacity for suffering, the simplicity and instinctive ease with which they make their adjustments to existence, the stoicism with which they face physical pain, their lack of demonstration and passive endurance in illness, and by their unpretentious deaths. Their worries are few, and their "conscientious sufferings" probably no more than fear manifestations, or the sentimental understanding of their human friends.

But with man how different! His capacity for suffering seems infinite, and to many stands for the threatening, chastening vengeance of an aggrieved and angered Maker. But the truly thoughtful cannot escape the insistence of a deeper meaning in the

sufferings of the human heart. The belief that the mission of such suffering is the nurture and strengthening of the moral nature, lifts it from the domain of all that is dreary and hateful and hopeless into one of the infinitely planned forces for the development of the perfect man. But how far from such a constructive conception are most of us! Our multiplied burdens are glibly recited as reasons for failure, as adequate and ample causes for us to cultivate dissatisfaction with life and its methods. And it would be so easy to cry, "What is the use?" and recklessly disregarding the inner call, respond gaily to the beckoning hand of pleasure and the eager bid of profit, letting beauty bewitch and indulgence intoxicate, were it not for the insistent quiet voice which will not still, were it not for the remorseless black hours with self and the ghastly mornings after. Deep thinking is not necessary to show us how inevitably, in these days of superabundance, the overgrowth of our wants brings on a wasting of our capacity for enjoyment. Whenever we overreach that essential balancing of fairness with ourselves, whenever we desert the inner better for the outer "good," we realise some sense of the relentlessness with which defeat attends our defective attitudes.

Life faced squarely, and its challenge accepted in the spirit in which it is given, is a serious business, and to wring from it that victory which stands for abiding inner calm, for peace of mind and joy of soul, calls for the earnest and wise use of the best each one has. There is a strife with self, with ram-

pant thoughts, with errant feelings and apathetic wills which is essential to all true developmental progress, and no wisdom would subtract one whit from the sincerity, the steadfastness and the energy with which the strife for high moral living should be waged. But wildly as thoughts may be tangled, and discordant as may be the din of jangled emotions, they cannot equal in damage to human happiness and productiveness that great mass of non-essential, self-centring strife with self. Thus many of us choose unwisely and persevere persistently in burdening our inner life with that which but clutters and defaces and taints and eventually destroys the internal serenity so essential to the strength and happiness of existence.

**The Worry Habit.**—Even as our hands and eyes examine the purchase at the market-place, so our mind's eye should scrutinise its own thoughts and plans, its feelings and its decisions. The seriousness of our mental activities demands earnestness of censorship. Anxiety was given to make us doubly alert and intense to meet the crises which come, but worry is a form of self-torment which men and women have invented these latter busy days. In this worrying world the worry-face has become omnipresent. The knitted brow, the pursed, tight lips early rob the fairest features of their fairness; intensity of tone destroys sweetness of voice; the restless hand and nervous gait discredit dignity of bearing; while the impatience and the whine, the selfish intensity and waspish irritability by which worry

is so frequently expressed, mar life's relationships, and but embitter self with self.

Worry is a fear expression—'tis anticipatory dread, an energy-leaking habit, easily formed and of rapid growth, these strenuous times. When once entrenched within, it casts its baneful spell over coming events. The morning starts with an inane questioning of the weather. The ordering of the day's food supply, the return of the laundry, the children's lessons and their safe arrival from school, the matching of the silk for the repair of the old dress, become matters of more than state importance; while the crowded store, the damp feet, the coughing neighbour, the wait on the street corner for the car, are all seriously and anxiously weighed as to their probable effect upon personal health. The details of office, store and shop are allowed to burden the mind, to weigh down and depress the very spirit which should be the well-spring of hourly joy. The clutch of worry distorts the insignificant into the momentous, the non-essential into the vital, the inevitable into the irreparable, the developmental into the excruciating. Worry so saps vital strength that it is small wonder that the worry habit dominates the lives of most of the nervously ill. So damaging is it that, if unchecked, it is capable of snapping the cord of reason in those essentially defective through nervous heredity.

Worry so often masquerades in the garb of worthiness that many become its innocent victims. Maternal solicitude, with all its love and tenderness

and beauty, is its favourite lurking place; and all too quickly that tender passion, under this crude touch, degenerates into selfish, unreasoning, useless fear. Necessity's sombre garments are frequently preempted by Worry's craven form—its dignity displaced by Worry's mockery. Duty, Honour, Pride—all surrender their virtues to this heartless thief of good. Worry easily persuades the imagination to twist coming events into shapes of terror, until we cower and shudder under the shadow of the very phantoms which we have created within our breasts. The worry habit is capable of misdirecting our energies until half our strength is wasted upon that which is not alone useless, but inwardly damaging and disrupting. Worry is a teacher of fear, a counsellor of indecision, an educator of misery. As with things about us, so inwardly we may unwisely choose and hurtfully attend to ten thousand gripping interests, neglecting, even through the years, the supreme question of character development. Worry is a reaction of ignorance, of inadequacy of will, of narrowness of conception. The full-grown character, human nature living under the inspiration of high moral ideals, and the soul which has broken away from selfishness, immediate and ultimate, know not worry.

**The Morbid Conscience.**—Worry reaches its climax as a damaging influence when it succeeds in interfering with the wholesome, constructive workings of conscience. Conscience is the heart of the moral nature, a heart whose throbs are quickened in the pres-

ence of temptation, which feels anguish in moral defeat and degradation, a heart which aches like a mother's for the good which has been lost, a heart which cries out and will not be stilled when the vital truths of one's highest conception of living have been violated. But all these disturbances of this delicate organ of the soul have in them elements of rectification and purification which, if recognised and accepted and followed, lead to higher niceties of moral adjustment. The presence of a conscience ever stands for a higher order of being. In the absence of its guidance, man's struggle toward perfection would have long since ended in universal riotous living. Cold reason would eschew it; materialism would claim it as but incidental; selfish ambition ignores it; but the fact remains that when men are honest with themselves, when they are in deadly earnest in their quest for the best, they do not go far astray without realising that there is something wrong in their inner life.

Racial instincts are planted deep, fundamentally and creatively deep, in human nature, but when two or more are gathered together, these instincts are soon found at variance with ethical demands. The whole problem of self-adjustment would be infinitely simplified were the conscience an accurate guide, were the conscience incorruptible, did the conscience present a unified standard for all. But conscience is only the medium through which the saving light of truth enters the soul, a lens all too often imperfect, a lens which may distort and bedim and pervert the

truth. Just as poorly adjusted spectacles set the whole landscape awry, so the defective conscience defaces truth, and it is well for the nervous sufferer to calmly and seriously investigate the quality of the conscience he is using. The easy-going kind is a very comfortable possession, when one is satisfied to live and die identified with the lower orders of mankind. Such a conscience passively smiles as its owner blandly allows the essence of his character to be frittered away in exchange for littleness and barrenness. The selfish conscience is even more short-sighted. It guides its soul away from the instinctive vision of whole-hearted fraternalism with its service of "good-will toward man," through the narrow confines of self-satisfied righteousness, making possible that soul-choking "better than thou" attitude. It holds eternally before the gaze the mockery of a personal salvation which disregards the joys, the rights, and the ideals of others. Most of us are satisfied with the conventional conscience, the conscience which fits the ideas of our set, of the day and age in which we happen to be living, of the denomination to which we belong, of the standards of our employer or the platforms of our party, of the decisions of the court or the exactions of our state laws. Conventional conscience works very harmoniously with utilitarian morality.

A few who will always appear choice, are guided by the esthetic conscience, the conscience which demands beauty of thought and beauty of expression and beauty of conduct. It is too bad that beauty,

with all its charm of appeal, with all its cost of restraint and effort, cannot stand as a high expression of soul-development. An intimate knowledge of the lives of Byron, Wagner, Oscar Wilde and other masters of beauty of form, word or tone, of many whose powers of eloquence have swayed multitudes, has mercilessly sustained the assertion that art, beauty, esthetics, given in their highest expression, do not make men good, nor necessarily have their origin in good men. The esthetic conscience does not save man from himself.

Of the perverted forms of conscience most commonly found as a damaging influence in the nervous life, the morbid conscience is the most inveterate offender. The morbid conscience is an overworked conscience, is a conscience which insists upon injecting itself critically, censoriously, painfully, into all of life's activities. The morbid conscience erects artificial standards of its own. Refusing to accept simple truth as such, it industriously perverts it into forms of its own liking. We are reminded of the evangelist who, when given a trip abroad, covered his eyes as he ascended the Rhine, that the entrancing beauties of that noble river might not entice him away from thoughts spiritual, and reduce him to mere worldly-mindedness. Overconscientiousness loads the mind with scruples which are but the husks of goodness. Morbid conscientiousness either cheats the soul by introducing the morally grotesque, or agitates it by a wasteful intensity which would blind judgment and use feeling alone as its messenger.

The morbid conscience may be crudely selfish or fanatically unselfish. And finally, this perverted interpreter of life's truth would ever keep its soul wallowing in the Slough of Despond through its persistence in holding before our eyes the evil we have done, causing us to relentlessly punish ourselves, and losing for us that blessing which we all need, that great inspiration which comes when we learn to cherish our good. The leadership of our virtues will ever carry us further in the great conflict of life, will select for us more wisely beneficent adjustments than we can ever reach through a morbid reiteration of the wrong we have done, and the mistakes we have made. Man is a mixture of good and bad. Many, through morbid conscience, have long since given up the hope of being anything but unutterably evil, here, hereafter and forevermore. Yet on the other hand we meet those who for years have believed that they sin not, that through some special series of personal manifestations of Providential interest, they are so utterly good that sin literally cannot find a sticking place on their devout hides.

The impression that there is not a helpful consciousness of our wrong doing should not obtain for a moment. A conscience is indeed defective in its essential element as interpreter of truth, which does not tell us frankly and forcibly and clearly when we have wronged the best within us. But morbid conscientiousness is fatal to moral health, and moral health profoundly influences nervous health.

In the chaos of human development there is such

an infinitude of nearby interests, there are so many appealing reactions which promise instant returns of physical comfort, or mental ease, or esthetic enjoyment, that it is small wonder that so many slip through the beckoning years of youth and the commanding years of maturity, and not till age approaches do they realise that their soul self has persistently ignored the inner voice. Then as the fires burn low and the watcher sits alone by the darkening embers and looks within, he sees but a small soul—a wrinkled soul; he sees the explanation for the restless, uneasy years of the past; he recognises the reason for his present sad plight, that pitiable plight of an empty, wretched old age.

Consciousness of evil, no matter when it comes, must ever be accepted as a mark of progress, as the opening of a better way. But whether conscience shall prove the whip of scorpions, multiplying the miseries of existence, or a divine messenger bearing tidings of peace, will ever rest in that adjustment of infinite import which determines whether we are slaves or victors of self.

# CHAPTER XXI

## SUBLIMATION OF STRIFE

**Selfish Strife.**—Man has developed tremendously in his own estimation since he frantically climbed trees, and ducked in palpitating panic into the welcome darkness of some opportune cave, to save his precarious life from some lumbering, intent quadruped. In these days of pride of clothes, pride of intellect and pride of comfort, he disputes his very Creator, the *I* has outgrown the *you,* and he ignores the Him. Man has much and he knows much, and has egotistically fallen into the habit of estimating his worth by his possessions and his reputation. The dollars he can count, the size of his factory's output, the flattering opinions he can secure, all too commonly have an excessive value in his estimation, while what he truly *is* remains a matter to be dismissed promptly as an uneasy contemplation. Even in the multiplicity of his holdings, desire is rarely sated. On the contrary, having things seems to beget an itch for more things, until the piled-up possessions of the average "successful" person, as compared to his legitimate and wholesome needs, have long ago passed into the category of absurdities.

Each dollar owned or represented in chattels unquestionably stands for a definite amount of con-

densed power. But when the real needs of the man are counted, how few of these dollars he can truly own—superficial possession, yes—but his actual personal utilisation will be everlastingly limited. Still desire eggs him on, ever eloquent in suggesting reasons for the more, ever greedy to equal or surpass neighbour or competitor, ever giving a false direction to that superb quality of energy which is mankind's—a direction which ends in the deadening strife for possessions. Even crude desire helps blind the eyes of most of us to the simplicity of our legitimate needs, and causes us to eat three times the food which the brain-working body can beneficially utilise, while our wives demand five times the amount for clothing that unselfish, self-forgetting honesty, in this world of unequal distribution of luxury and destitution, should allow. And yet, to the struggling, striving, fighting, intense many, there is no stopping-place. Frenzy for acquisition, craze for possession, is the miserable story of all too many in their unsated gamble with life, is their highest expression of the inherent human power of overcoming. The superb fighting instinct rises no higher than the "I want" of self. But when all has been counted and triumphantly piled away in safe-deposit boxes, the break comes, that change which creates a new order of existence wherein all of the trickery of close trading, all the steel-nerved generalship of high finance, all the gripping, gouging tactics of soulless capital, are useless assets, are but smothering, stifling memories.

Desire for possession barely outdistances, in the

great strife for self, the stimulation which pride of externals lays upon humankind. From the pathetic strut of the Borneo chief, clad in a battered stovepipe hat, and a grin of superiority, through the various walks and orders of life, men and women strain to produce effects, most of which possess no more true merit than the puerile dignity of the behatted Borneo. It would seem that for many the art of living is expressed in how we look, what we wear, what is said of us, in what we say and how we inflect it, in whom we know and how frequently they entertain us. And for these things we strive from the kindergarten on, while what we are, what we have done and are doing to that sacred inner self, is considered only during what we call our "morbid moments,"—those rare occasions when some cataclysmic interruption to our comfortable journey through life brings us face to face with questions eternal. We fairly trample over each other in our selfish scramble for fame, deriding and discrediting those who surpass, struggling and striving to keep ahead, envying—even hating—those who press us closely. We barter the satisfying, inspiring pride in existence for a cheap, evanescent, palling pride of appearance. We may discount ourselves, for effect, to auditors whom we would despise should we hear them express the same opinion of us. We have allowed pride in our individuality to grow until covertly, if not openly, we resent correction, till our blood fairly boils under the heat of criticism; and hot words and cold words, and sarcasm and ridicule and invective, and biting

retort, with acrid argumentation and disputatious contentions, are the worthy weapons with which we strive to maintain pride of self.

**Unavoidable Battles.**—We have glanced for a moment at mankind seething in the grip of selfish strife. The uselessness, the waste, the utter weariness of it all is oppressing, and the yearning comes to slip into some quiet nook of existence, and simply, quietly while away the days, far from the toil, the hurly-burly, away from the contention and acrimony—safe, alone and at peace. But it may not be so. Much is said of the seal of heredity. Environment is credited with magician's powers; but the real master of life is the soul, is that wonderful inner power which is the true creator of what we are, and of the universe in which we live. To the ignorant soul, the world is but a small plot of landscape; to the ignorant, superstitious soul, it is peopled with pursuing spirits of destruction. To the sordid soul, the world is heartless and selfish; to the hating soul, it is a den of malevolence. To the educated soul, this same world is a perfect system of coordinated law. To the religious soul, goodness is inherent in all. To the artistic soul, beauty lurks allwhere, begging to be uncovered. To the philosophic soul, law and order, and right and ultimate righteousness exist, latent or manifest, in all mankind. What we are within determines what we shall see and feel, what we shall select and to what we shall attend, and herein is the basis of the true ego. Life is so much raw material which, acted upon by the inner self, becomes char-

acter. There is no escaping the conclusion that the soul of man is an omnipotent force which creates its own environment, its own atmosphere, its own happiness, its own eternity; and, whether in the mad mob of selfish strife or in utter loneliness, man's better nature is ever called upon to make adjustments. No placid inertness will bring content, no unthought indolence will procure satisfaction. To every life worthy the name come battles of adjustment, the decisions, the choices, the selection of the principles of existence, the election of right or wrong.

One of the earliest of life's inevitable battles is the assertion of our wants, as opposed to our needs. Wants are insatiable; needs are simple. Wants dominate and demand; needs lead and develop. Wants deceive and overload; needs reveal and strengthen. And so the fight for the useless or for that which truly counts, is really the fight which determines whether the life shall be one of confusion, with strain of strife, or of order, and the comfort of satisfaction. In responding to the call of wants, we fight in the ranks for misery. In limiting our strife to our needs, we battle for happiness. Fight man must, or he is no man. Fight he must, or he remains an undeveloped weakling. It is not a question of fighting, but it is a question of what he shall fight. Duty must often be at sword's points with Desire, and the demands of these two frequently make a bloody battle-ground of the soul. Desire is a force usually selfish, commonly reckless—a wilful power, hotly, madly resenting Duty's firm "Halt!" And

many lives are spent in wasteful disputations, because Duty has not been reinforced by principles which are inviolate.

Each life finds its peace beset with special difficulties. Self-pity ever calls for humiliating surrenders —it is a traitor to honourable peace. Undue self-interest is ever content with small victories, so it is a poor fighter in life's larger battles. Impatience and depression and ignoble fear and hate are mutinous members of life's army, which have a tenacious, peace-destroying hold upon existence. Pride must be fought with accomplishment. There is a worthy pride in wholesome doing, which well displaces the pride in possession, the pride in appearance, the pride of pretence. Fortune and misfortune alike tempt the soul to unworthy surrender—fortune with its mockery of plenty, misfortune with its taunt of injustice. If a rational adjustment to life's facts is to be made, the snobbish ego must give way to a wholesome acceptance of personal limitations. License which masquerades as liberty must give way to restraint of desire, of false pride, of selfish egotism, for restraint is essential to that genuine freedom which may be rightfully called liberty. The so-called liberty of license simply creates slaves of desire, while the liberty of restraint develops the mastery of self-control. Disciplined freedom alone is righteous freedom.

In the weak, the susceptible, the morbid, frequently arise questions of eternal justice. By the strong, during the hours of deep adversity, or in the black

midnight of despair, the possibility of divine justice is questioned. Indeed, to all mankind come problems of the future, and we seem mere prisoners, with the relentless walls of time gradually closing in upon our hapless souls. Now the vanity of worldly values, the emptiness of selfish pride, are obvious. Our knowledge fails, our reason falters, and all our strivings and denyings and our worthy fightings seem vain. But man's soul has other possessionss than absolute knowledge or the demonstrations of reason, for faith and hope have been given him as wings to carry him over his narrowing prison walls into the freedom which accepts no temporal limitations. Faith is that quality without which many suffering nervously will never know peace,—but it must be a faith which turns from selfishness to goodness, a faith which strikes off the manacles of fear, which lays hold upon and honours the good in self, with a resolution which will not be denied; a faith which develops the fighting strength through a willingness to use it valiantly and fearlessly, a faith which looks away from error to right, and which seeks the lessons in wrongs done, and realises the blessing in forgiving the wrongs received. Such faith will cure when medicines and treatments and wearisome rests, and ill-advised operations, and the laying on of mercenary hands, and the application of patented oils of gladness, have failed. These and uncounted other mechanical and medicinal procedures have failed, as they ever will fail, to help a great throng of the nervous, whose illness is not of body nor of mind, but

is a sickness of the soul. Such illness is moral illness, born of an unworthy strife with right, is a result of self-gratifying rebellions with the voice of good, is fever and pain and restlessness coming through the contamination of unholy acts or self-inflicted infections.

**The Strife that Saves.**—Sometime since it was suggested that man's soul was not intended to float to Heaven on "flowery beds of ease." When the average man with nervous ailments takes stock of his true self, the conviction is usually forthcoming that there is a big work for his soul to do. His temperament, for instance, needs changing—which is usually some job—in fact, such a job that the quitter says "It can't be done." But the quitter is one who usually tries the short cuts in life, and finds himself in a bog. Few of us enter into the press of life with a temperament ready-made to meet all the requirements of development, without undergoing fundamental modifications. Let us take, for instance, the morbid temperament, with its ever reiterated depressions, its woful outlook on life, its miserable retrospections. With such a possession the fight for cheer constitutes one of those examples of that intense strife that saves. Knowledge will teach one so fighting to earnestly question the powers of depression which darken his days. All have burdens; therefore, reason will suggest that burdens are not necessarily causes for unhappiness, but more probably opportunities for overcoming. Common sense will demand that self be accepted cheerfully, not mourn-

fully. Will announces the need for training in enjoyment, and clings to the attitude of cheer in spite of the demands of the morose, the self-pitying and the unworthily emotional. A few weeks of earnest effort toward cheer will find the striver at least facing in the right direction, looking toward the sunlight and away from the shadow. It is given the human soul to maintain a consistent, consecrated rebellion against the tyranny of depression, until habits of cheer thought, of cheer feeling and of cheer expression have been attained. Much morbidness is simply a spineless slipping back on the hard upward path to an easy lounging place. While none of us can modify the product of the weather man, all but the seriously toxic or volitionally defective may command their own internal weather, so that while the storm buffets without, the spirit within may be calm and serene.

The human soul is like the roots of a plant, which reach down into the soil and select the substances which are to be converted into trunk, and stem and leaf, and bloom, and fruit and fragrance. The oak root deliberately and unerringly selects toughness, and strength, and stores up warmth and protection. The root of the vine burrows far for the juicy sweetness of its fruit. The lily's roots select from the black muck in which they find themselves, fragrance, and the whiteness of purity. Even so the soul dips into human experience and finds hope in adversity, transforms pain into strength-giving power, finds fairness in play and happiness in work, and recog-

nises and accepts and profits by the blessings in drudgery. The soul may transform the catastrophes of experience into the character which endures, for it is not the catastrophe, but what we do with the catastrophe, that counts. Such is the soul's selecting power, a power which may plunge life into chaotic strife, breed unhappiness, discontent and heartache, or may choose to convert the raw material of experience into power, peace and spiritual plenty.

The strife that saves early recognises the limitations of all human power, and accepts the renunciations which eliminate damaging strife. The nature which holds fast to ordinary rebellion looks upon renunciation as an evidence of indifference, or of mere weak will. But renunciation abides in all selection. Every choice means the surrender of many things for one. The monarch renounces privacy, the relaxation of informality and simplicity, the soul-satisfying comforts of the modest home life, for the pomp and circumstance, for the wearying splendour and the exacting formalities of his kinghood. The student renounces the interests of the street, the stimulation of society, the joys of the theatre and ballroom, during months and years, and emerges from his study wan, wearied and worn, that he may possess power of mind. Many hours, daily, of exacting, relentless practice and study, with renunciation for ten or fifteen years of most of life's so-called pleasures, is the price paid by the musician for the perfection of touch, the delicacy of expression, the

peculiar clearness, depth and sweetness of tone, which make the master. True renunciation always implies a strife with those things which lure and tempt, but it is in the strength born of this strife, the giving up of the now for the future, that liberty and power are won, and ultimate defeat and suffering are avoided.

In the fight for character, nature is a rough teacher. An intimate study of great men and women reveals tragedies of denial, years of what the weaker of us would call agony of privation, or an intensity of effort which we would resent as slavish. Again reason should show us that cooperation is not slavery, not servility, but that it ever assumes individuality. When we finally learn to accept Nature's terms, and work her way, cooperate with her forces—then we work miracles. The difficulties of existence are Nature's great gymnasium of the soul. The will is the backbone of the moral nature, developed only through striving. Each one has his call to work. It is always a near call first, but the dreamer and the sentimentalist are not aroused by the voice of homely duties; they wait for that far cry which would take them into the mysterious, enchanting beyond, and waiting for the inspiring, for the beautiful, they fail to find the good ever at hand.

The supreme value of volition is seen as we recognise that it practically forges our destiny. We all have good—some good—and it is too often our shame that we rest satisfied in the some which we have; that we use it as a mantle to hide our less good, to

conceal our evil. Meanwhile that spirit of strife, planted deep within our breasts to save us from our weaknesses, surrenders and conceits, would have us join good to good, or as we were formerly admonished, to "grow in grace." And in thus perfecting our personalities, we early make them proof against possible nervous damage growing out of rebellions injurious to the moral nature. Striving for wealth will bring us that which will ultimately prove but dross. The learning of the savant brings no warmth of heart. The most flattering successes of a brilliant social season are paid for in the sufferings of envy, and jealousy and heartaches. The conquering hero returns, to be ignominiously dragged from his pedestal because of some immaterial slip which offends popular opinion. The voice of the prima donna ultimately loses its exquisite fulness, and critics and public turn away to proclaim the new, young songstress queen, instead. Wealth, learning, brilliancy, heroism, art—striven for, sacrificed for, lived for—even when attained, are not adequate to satisfy the inner life. The only certain success that can come to humankind abides in that purification, that sublimation of strife, which is found in the battle for the ever-better, which will unerringly lead to that one supreme human accomplishment—the development of a beautiful soul.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE FULFILMENT OF SELF

**Life's Failures.**—As we have studied the various complexities in which we find the nervous victim entangled in his struggle for adjustment, it has become increasingly obvious that he is often a puppet of his own forces. His keenly responsive sensibilities are ever starting and halting and turning about to the jangle of calling, commanding, threatening, abusive, encouraging tongues, until he feels but a distraught, wretched victim of circumstance. And such indeed he often is, and must so remain until the understanding self points out his basic weaknesses; and an abidingly resolute self holds him steadfast in his wisely chosen new course of life, until he passes beyond confusion of thought and feeling and willing to that abiding victory—a reasoned self-mastery.

Along the highway are scattered many who fail. Some who cannot or will not go on have sunk down discouraged and hopeless. Some, cheaply satisfied, miserably content, have gone as far as they planned, and many of these will be seen shamelessly erecting altars, at which they regularly kneel in worship of the great god Comfort; and in this very false worship exists their failure to find peace. Others quit the upward road through the short-sightedness which

chooses the blossom that wilts with the day, the fruit which but tantalises the palate; which seeks the cool of the shade where follows the midnight chill. They grasp the thing at hand rather than develop the character which needs not tangible possessions nor visible friends, but in the great wealth of its own strength and faith, is, and forever shall be, superior to passing needs. Thus many turn aside from the exacting path which the experience of all time points out as the only one leading to the City of Abiding Joy, and allow their best selves to idle away year after year of those days that were given to make man failure-proof.

Still others meander along, ignorantly, unthinkingly. These are they who are living mechanically, not recognising, or thoughtlessly ignoring, the call of inspiration, the leadership of higher ambition, the reiterated pleadings of the inner, better voice. They note only the stifling dust of the journey, the pebbles which annoy, the rocks over which they stumble, the swelter of the day, the tug of the upward pull. They are reacting with machine-like autonomy to the happenings of the hour. Scrutinising these stragglers, we see many hopeless faces, and slouching, dejected, wearied forms dragging unwilling steps, or sullenly and doggedly turning their backs upon the haven for which they started. Here is pessimism—the pessimism of despair, which stands inevitably for failure in life's adjustment. Despair in loss is one of mankind's most certain defeats. Earnest thought will convince us that human existence, from

the standpoint of possessions, of friendships, of health and ability, is a foreordained failure—a deliberately planned tenure of life during which people, things, and self have been placed in the soul's hands to be used for its development toward perfection. The giving and the taking, and the having and the holding of all save the soul's own strength are matters which, even in the hands of the strongest, are for but a few numbered days.

One of the most alluring of modern man's temptations, into which those of keenly responsive nervous temperament are particularly prone to fall, these days of marvellous intellectual opportunities, is the exclusive cultivation of the brain, while the soul remains unnoticed and neglected. Superficially, the rewards which art and mechanics, finance and the professions, science and history, hold out to the supermind, should be all-satisfying. But the heart beyond that supermind knows its own neglect, realises how narrow and mean, how even ugly it may be, when compared to the spiritual wholesomeness of some simple-witted artisan neighbour. And when the value of that internal peace which is found in the perfect harmony of human life is recognised, the ultimate victory of the great mind with an undeveloped soul is in truth a small one. Too frequently, when the searching test of that life does come, the test which cannot be answered by syllogisms or equations or formulæ, but only by the unquestioned choice of the hard, pride- and ease-sacrificing, right road, the master intellect will probably choose the path of

failure. How much of our time and painful thoughtfulness, our patience, our means, our vital energies, we devote to the cultivation of what can ever be but our second best. Few classes of life's wayfarers are more conspicuous failures than those who spend their resources in the systematic cultivation of pleasure. No better proof can exist that man was not intended to make amusement his first business than the ultimate dreary weariness of it all, and the unnatural excesses which wreck body, disorganise mind and stultify the soul, so constantly seen in the life of the selfish pleasure-seeker.

The person who has suffered nervously for a number of years and retained even a fair degree of unselfishness, is rare. The self-centredness, the self-seeking, the self-pity, the self-indulgence of the nervously inadequate, create monuments of selfishness, and there is no defeat in the battle for soul-supremacy so inevitably certain as the defeat of the selfish self. Life is rich in its giving at every turn, the inner nature finds abundant wealth awaiting; but the ability to receive goes hand in hand with the willingness to give. Time must be given that the power of patience may come; control must be exercised that the strength of temperance may fortify; desires must be smothered that the buoyancy of cheer may lighten the load; enmities must be wrestled with and strangled that the warmth and generosity and the inspiration of love may attend each step of the way. Noisy self-assertion, with the vain pride of conceit, must be

subdued, or the self which rules time and events will never come to its throne.

Training for Efficiency.—In the problem stated at the beginning of our study, we assumed that the normal, earnest man or woman was capable of selecting wisely and training for efficiency. We have repeatedly seen that wisdom in selection is dependent upon the clear, wholesome thinking which makes it possible for the mind to elect from the great mass of directions and misdirections placed before it that which for itself is most certainly true. But when this is done, we have but decided upon the direction we are to take. The long, hard journey, demanding denials of present comfort and expenditure of days of effort, from which results seem so small, is ahead; the very conception of training implies consistent, directed effort. Repeatedly in previous pages enemies of man's efficiency, as expressed in his nervous health, have been portrayed, and as frequently those qualities which are his to develop and with which he may overcome, have been indicated. In these final pages we are realising that, immense as life is, numerous and damaging as are man's foes, physical, mental and moral, man, in learning the art of right living in the various aspects of his nature, is bigger than his problems, that his soul is more potent than all its enemies. But upon this, his greatest force, he so seldom relies. Too frequently he is found straining and struggling with his problems, facing an inevitable defeat, because he has accumulated so little soul energy,

he has depended on the help of others, the stimulation of drugs, the shrewdness of his mind, the inherent elasticity and resistance of his mental powers. He has trusted in the things of existence, he has not stored up that vast possible reserve through years of the practice of peace, the sanity of self-sacrifice, the economy of patience, which assure to him a momentum ever unchecked by life's so-called defeats.

One of the greatest secrets of successful training for efficiency resides in the ceaseless work of unseen builders. Man is surrounded by monuments of his industry. All lands are dotted with his cities, his buildings now rear skyward in multiples of twenty stories, his pyramids have weathered the storms of ages, and in pride and poverty he is housed in a hundred million homes. But this work of man's hands, spectacular as it is, may not be compared with that produced by the microscopic labours of the marine zoophytes. They carpet the sea; silently, mysteriously, they build their fortresses—the coral reefs, hidden enemies of the mariner. Upon their shoulders are reared the foundations of islands richly luxuriant in all that ministers to man's physical needs and pleasures. In man's own life the constant unnoted activities of his subconscious self are irresistibly constructive in their ultimate effect upon his character growth. The ceaseless accumulations of low thinking and high thinking, of noble feeling and ill feeling, of weak willing and strong willing, slipping quickly, silently into the apparently forgotten,

often escaping the censorship of conscience, are held under the surface to form reefs to wreck, or fertile islands to provide the richness of life. So unconsciously, inevitably, habits of right thinking, feeling and doing decide the fulness and perfection of ultimate victory, while it is as inevitably true that the false, the unworthy, the weak, the ignoble in thought and act may accumulate as hidden reefs to determine final wreckage.

No one can be certainly efficient who does not cultivate a first-hand acquaintance with things and people. Much of our knowledge comes to us through books, but reading is not actual contact. Much reading with little doing develops a life of false valuations, which becomes an uncertain foundation for successful soul living. There is an armchair piety, comfortable, self-satisfied, superficially beautiful, which is as practically useless in the storm of adversity, as helpless in the biting need of an unfortunate neighbour, as the ancient image with head of gold and feet of clay.

To the one who has earnestly and determinedly undertaken self-training, who has made the revolutionising decision that all events, great and small, shall be reacted upon by his inner-self righteously, wholesomely, constructively, the realisation soon comes that no outside influence can ultimately prove superior to that self when asserting its best. Henceforth, small disasters become only as roughened surfaces against which he whets his wits. Great disasters send him down to his foundations, which he

enlarges and strengthens with the rocks hewn from the granite which would have crushed. The child and the tyro may meet the superficial requirements of success; it takes manhood to meet and overcome failure. None knows his real strength till he has faced failure and tasted the bitterness of defeat. Physical and mental suffering and soul pain come to all, that endurance may be developed, for without this the strength which conquers can never be. The master man laughs in the face of personal hurts, offences fail to offend, insults fail to embitter; he turns with shame from the so-called depths of suffering; for him honour and majesty of soul are found upon the heights of suffering.

The very heavens challenge man to grow in strength and power through his struggle with the adversities which this unfinished world and its undeveloped inhabitants lay upon him. To the many who cry out in their weariness of life at the lack of interest and the apparent narrowness of it all, there can be but one answer. No self is ever fulfilled, no better nature is ever completely asserted, without wisely selected resolutions. Develop self, and life will grow; increase interests, and interests will multiply; beautify thought, and the world's magnificence will be revealed; displace dislikes with charity and the love of ministry, and all life will be magnified and beautified.

In our study of self we have been almost confused by the many-sidedness of human nature, its many avenues for development, its many approaches for

receiving damage. It would be all mystifying, and the training for efficiency a hopeless task indeed, were it not for that wonderful mentor within, which will lead so truly when its better directions are consistently followed. A hopeless problem it would be, were not the answer found in the direction of all self-assertion to the development of that one best self, rather than in attempting to overcome in detail the multiplicity of life's possible reactions. Such self-assertion will inevitably, if not checked, or thwarted, if honestly and resolutely followed, gradually point more and more truly toward the pole-star of eternal right. So the whole question of training for efficiency can be stripped of its apparent superhuman demands with the realisation that if one does the best he knows, and is able, in training the body; if he develops his mind along simple, wholesome lines, and denies the soul nothing which can add to its unhampered, unwarped development, he will gradually but most certainly attain his highest possible powers of efficiency.

Finding the Victorious Self.—If the conclusions of the foregoing paragraphs have been accepted, it must be agreed that, inadequate as is human existence for the possession of universal ease and unending pleasure, for the preservation of youth and fadeless beauty, it has every provision needful for the most perfect development of character. Failure comes so frequently because we do not take possession of that self which has been given us; because we neglect the life of unselfish purpose, which knows

not the smallness of surrender to selfish suffering. The habit of success pays handsomely in a compound interest, even as we have found how wretchedly certain is the piled-up interest of defeat through surrender. We fail to possess ourselves completely because we are not willing to put forth the sustained effort of self-control, which is the price of carrying out all developing resolutions. We fail to take possession of self because we are willing to entertain too many of self's enemies; we cherish too many beliefs and feelings and decisions which are not compatible with worthy self-respect.

It is one of the anomalies of soul-development that only in caring less about self man finds his victorious self. He may object that selfish desires have been so deeply implanted that they must stand for significant demand and need. But truly, desires were given to make possible the virtue of generosity, to exalt man to superman through the miracle of self-forgetfulness. No one has truly possessed self who is satisfied with lopsided moral development. There is little virtue in abstaining from wine-drinking when one grows periodically drunk on wrath and hatred. There is little worth in the pious hour of religious service which is followed by a week of peevish, petulant irritability. The goodness of the "generous" donation to flood sufferers, or war orphans, or poverty-pinched unfortunates, is a mockery when it represents a toll of widows' mites, the hard-earned savings of the struggling farmer, or the pitiful pittances

of servant girls, filched through masterful manipulations of the markets.

The victorious self has long since accepted as an inspiring truism that "every worst has its best," and that its continuous victories depend upon its never failing to find that best. It finds strength added to strength in its persistent efforts to minister, to carry help and cheer, and thus it becomes a most consistently and constantly happy self. Looking for good in all things, it learns more and more the art of recognising and enjoying all good things. The victorious self is the truly altruistic self, and altruism is egoism perfected. Such a self makes life generous, and in so doing ultimately finds itself abiding in the lap of bounty. The victorious self cannot miss the great secret of living. It recognises the horror of a life of inert idleness in a palace, compared to which toil in a coal-cellar would be heavenly. Striving for productive activity, thoughtless of the burden of possession, and saturating all its labour with friendship, not only for the doing but for the fellow-doer, it knows that there is no lasting interest outside of productive work, and that such activity is the highest expression of faith in operation.

The victorious soul recognizes that most of its problems are over when it has succeeded in filling self with the energies of sacrifice, of justice and of love; that when this is done, the power and beauty of fine living, the joy of deep living, have come.

Then also comes the realisation that one has unchained hidden powers within his soul of which he formerly had no consciousness—powers which cause his life to move onward toward its appointed goal with a resistless force. Such living is like the great wheel of an engine, which drives thousands of machines by the multiplied powers of its actively moving rim, while at its axis all is peace and calm and quiet. The victorious self recognises life as a gift, which instead of growing darker and more dreary, may acquire greater beauty and value daily; instead of being designed for misery and misfortune and hatred and discord and bitterness, is designed to develop in the highest degree the very best of manhood.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### HARMONY

**Life's Aims.**—Throughout the pages of our discussion in which the details of physical and mental adjustment have been considered, hint has followed hint of the individual's certain need of a moral directorship. When earnestly scrutinised, the strivings of body and mind for their selfish own are seen to lead on to complexity, perplexity, disorder and nervous discord. While suggestions have multiplied, based upon simplicity in physical and mental living, the necessity for ultimate control by the moral idea, as the only force resolving the dissonance of jangling nerves into harmony, has been reiterated with an undeniable insistence. Were man but an artist's manikin, to be posed and used and pushed aside, this insistence could never be a reasonable one. But he has been given his several score of years, free to do his worst with them, and equally free to do his best. We have repeatedly noted his marvellous activities and crowned him unchallenged king of his sphere, but truly, how insignificant is the work of his hands, even when directed by the flashing brilliancy of his mind! He cuts through the Isthmus, and when his thousands have died and his hundreds of millions have been spent, his canal is but a

rivulet when compared with Nature's waterways. He builds him piles of masonry till he proudly looks down upon the very clouds, but when he matches his most noble structures with Nature's mountainous buildings, his bravest efforts appear as veritable ant-hills. He extravagantly converts the stored-up wealth of ages into a million glinting lights to create his "Great White Way," and produces but a ghastly imitation of the resplendent effulgence of the orb of day. Truly man was created for greater than these —man who, with all his physical strenuosity barely scratches Nature's face, and who, with the accumulation of ages of mental intensity, is still unable to produce a single new atom of matter. Assuredly, the rationale of his being is not to be explained by his manipulations of things or the conjurings of his intellect.

But when he conceives his superpower, his miraculous power to meet disaster, and in it to find profit, to face defeat after defeat and therein acquire faith in his own permanence, to live for years within a frail, defective body, with a mind unable to respond to the promptings of ambition and inspiration, and thereby take on the greatness of gentleness—the conviction comes clear, a conviction which will not comfortably stay put aside—that life is intended to develop a noble self. This self is ever free from servility to physical promptings and the desires of the hour, is above the domineering and bulldozing demands of self-gratifying pretentions, is never submerged, or suffocated by the black fumes rising from the com-

bustion of internal strife. In the possibilities of the developed moral life is found the only satisfying answer to the query of existence. The moral is the only truly comprehensive life, the only life which accepts responsibilities in every domain, and recognises not only body and mind, but accepts the spiritual quality as well. This sets the whole man to work —body, mind and soul—and diligently attending to his adjustments, external and internal, attains harmonious adaptability. The possession which he alone can build up or tear down, disfigure or beautify, demoralise or spiritualise, is that self which was given him to perfect. This he may develop until a masterful assurance comes, an assurance which theory, ridicule and argument can never displace, that life, with all its wonderful complexities, its mighty possibilities, is insufficient to contain man when his higher powers are truly utilised.

> "God gave us love. Something to love
> He lends us; but when love has grown
> To ripeness, that on which it throve
> Falls off, and love is left alone."

**Life's Adjustments.**—The theme of our pages has been humanity's adjustments to things, people and self. Each day makes a thousand demands upon us all. Many rush through life, feverish and panting, and drop by the wayside, exhausted and defeated, because they have lacked the ability to unify experiences, to classify and place in order their principles of adjustment, to simplify the whole business of multiplex human reactions by reducing them to the

simple, unequivocal basis of the best right they know. Few there are who make an impartial audit of their book of life without finding a startling discrepancy between the actual self and the possible self. Many accept this stolidly, more ignore it recklessly, the majority resist the implication ingeniously. Many of the finer grade of the nervous are unable thus to dispose of the auditor's findings, and so the minor strains of self-accusing depression enter to produce discord in life's major harmonies.

The possible self moulds self; the actual self is often but putty in life's hands—a "victim of circumstances." Every self reaching the age of accountability has chosen, deliberately or thoughtlessly, the life of comfort of body, or the life of comfort of soul. When through years of following the former choice the nervous smash-up has come, then the possible self, ushered in by clear thinking, must appeal to the highest qualities of its will to substitute self-discipline for self-indulgence. The little happenings of the day, the eventful occurrences of the year, the vital experiences of a lifetime, comprising the whole stock-in-trade of the average actual self, mean little to the possible self, compared to the moulding influence which this self allows these happenings, large and small, to exercise over it. Applying this personally, a fundamental conception of life's normal adjustment has been attained, when I realise that it is not the experience which is vital, but what I allow it to do with me. Hosts of the nervous sit trembling at life's feast. They have not attained a spiritual

disregard for bodily feelings—that one practical contribution of Christian Science teachings, acceptance of which has healed many of the nervous.

Life relentlessly demands another adjustment—one so far-reaching in its influence as to determine the weal or woe of most of her children. We press hands, we touch lips, but an absolute knowing of one by another cannot be. Each existence is individual, and a certain gulf of loneliness surrounds each human soul—to cause us to "eat, drink and be merry," says the thoughtless; to send us into the highways and byways that we may forget it all in the turmoil of competition, says the so-called practical man. But eating and drinking and merrymaking, nor all the intensity of days on 'Change, can more than brush aside for the hour the sense of isolation, of remoteness. Like a shadow it follows to darken and chill, when the false fever of stimulation has gone. Again the thoughtful man sees the beckoning hand of the higher nature pointing to the something better which is ever waiting to be wedded to life. Each one who will look outward and upward with steadfast purpose will recognise that this something better consists of life's many unused beauties. Patience and thoughtfulness and gentleness and increasing capacity for friendship—that true friendship which seeks the privilege of rendering service—these are beauties wealthy in joys present and to come, eager to be wedded to our actual selves, that the peace and trust of the generosity-seeking possible self may be attained.

But life's crowning adjustment comes when the simplicity and harmony of spiritual leadership is accepted, for the true spiritual seeks the best in everything. Our lesser nature, puffed up with the pride of self, satisfied with its little victories, self-pityingly nursing its little defeats, lays hard hold on our lives and struggles persistently for the control. The whole wretched story of human unhappiness, of the apparent injustice of life's distribution of pain and pleasure, of wealth and poverty, of exaltation and debasement, would impel us to keep on playing the losing game. But a deeper discernment comes to the honest seeker of the true. A fairer, deeper study of human history discloses the significant fact that life's finest work has been done by those whose hearts have bled, those who have trod the wine-press alone. And again the revealing truth is apparent, that poverty and wealth, high estate and mediocrity, pain, loss and sin, are but the pieces on life's chess-board, to be moved by the soul to victory or defeat.

**Harmony in Complexity.**—The din of human discord is unceasing. A superficial view of human activities shows mankind as a struggling, striving, milling mass, in confusion from vortex to periphery. From this throng, ever and anon, numbers are seen rushing away, that they may find peace. But where is peace? One seeks it through solitude on the calm sea, and finds there but a passing tranquillity. Another betakes him to the mute seclusion of the mountains, and comes away awed by their grandeur. The drear wastes of the desert call "Peace!" to another,

they give him back but desolation. Upon a swaying branch, beside the thunder and roar of the cataract, swinging precariously close to instant destruction is a nest, a mother bird and her little ones, and from time to time the happy father contributes to the needs of his family—and peace is there. Oblivious to the swirling, threatening death, these little beings have performed the miracle of perfect adjustment, and live fearless and happy and blest. Men and women may do the same.

Life is complex in all its phases. Internal conflicts are numerous, the problems of the inner self are truly difficult ones; but with a simple, wholesome, harmony-seeking standard of life, all of its complexities may be simplified, and that harassing, torturing nervous system, the enemy of the neurotic, becomes a patient, faithful ally to the master. But discords are much more easily produced than harmonies. Children and the untutored fingers of maturity and age strike the keys of the piano, and harsh, strident sounds result. Children, and men and women, young and aged, often touch the keys of life's contacts with equal ignorance. It is not only our lack of knowledge which we allow to destroy life's harmonies. We seem ever willing to meet the evil in others with the evil in ourselves, and mankind's quarrel with mankind is Eden-old. The volumes of the world would be inadequate to record a small part of the details of man's fight against his fellowman, yet a quarrel is only possible when evil is met with evil. When character rises supreme to mere intellect as

mankind's directing force, man will fight with, instead of against, his fellowman.

Harmony among humankind would seem to-day but a far-off dream, but the principle of efficiency through harmony is an all-saving one, ready to lend itself as a creating force to every truth-seeking individual. All real adjustments lead to harmony of the better self with the truths that change not. Would those in need of nervous help but turn from energy-destroying strife, and lay hold on the truth that life is eager and ready to yield happiness, they would imbibe a vital lesson in that optimistic philosophy which is an absolute essential to the nervous stability of the neurotic. The individual alone is responsible for what he allows to dwell in his heart. The soul at peace is in harmony with life. The healthy soul is self kept in order. Happiness, so yearned for by all, though sadly deficient in the lives of the many, whose very sensitiveness to hurt should be their strongest incentive to strive for the true harmony of existence, cannot be forced out of life by whining resentments. It must come hand in hand with joy in one's work, power developed through the art of play, and the peace of the conscious "Well done!"

Inspiration whispers and promises, remorse threatens and shames. Both are given us to create motives and feelings for better doing. But we know ourselves only through effort, for the product of effort alone assures man of his ability to accomplish, and nowhere except in such ability abides that true

confidence in self which is the perfect fruit of well-doing. And a life of well-doing is the basis of nobility of soul, for life knows no success comparable to that truly serene self, gentle, kindly, merciful, supremely charitable—that serene self which holds the infinite power of repose and self-mastery—the perfect harmony of the simple life. Each day of such living is a day of victory, a day of uplift, a day of giving all and receiving the yet more. The progress of such living cannot be reckoned in years, for he who has attained the supreme victory through the harmonising of his whole nature with those magnificent forces intrusted to his keeping, knows no better or worse; for him it is always the best. Triumphantly he may finally breathe with the poet:

"So be my passing,
My task accomplished, and the long day done.
My wages taken and in my heart
Some late lark singing;
Let me be gathered to the quiet West,
The sundown, splendid and serene."

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